Jogging Around New England

CHARLES HANSON TOWNE

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JOGGING AROUND NEW ENGLAND

By CHARLES HANSON TOWNE

JOGGING AROUND NEW ENGLAND
LOAFING DOWN LONG ISLAND
AMBLING THROUGH ACADIA
AUTUMN LOITERERS
THE CHAIN
THE GAY ONES
TINSEL
GOOD OLD YESTERDAY
ADVENTURES IN EDITING
THIS NEW YORK OF MINE
SHAKING HANDS WITH ENGLAND
THE SHOP OF DREAMS

The Congregational Church at Old Lyme, Connecticut

JOGGING AROUND NEW ENGLAND

By

CHARLES HANSON TOWNE

Illustrated by

HENRY S. GILLETTE

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TO MY FRIEND

RICHARD HOFFMANN

who accompanied me on my journey;
whose sense of humor never failed
him; whose sense of direction won
my admiration

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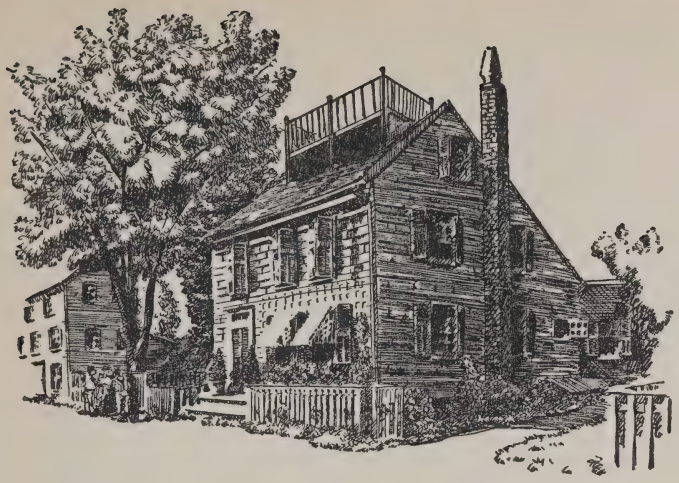


Author's Note

EVERY one asks, "How much did your trip through New England cost?" We were gone a little over five weeks. We spent exactly three hundred dollars. This included gas, meals and lodging—everything—for both of us. If, like us, you are light-breakfast travelers (two meals a day is enough for anybody); if, occasionally, you desire only a snack lunch or dinner, you could fare forth for even less than we paid out.

It's all a matter of judgment and one's personal needs. We were "entertained," as you will see; and that fact must be taken into consideration, I suppose. In round figures, however, the sum we spent would be about average. C. H. T.

I

MOST people, I have noticed, are in a hurry when they travel. They rush abroad on the fastest steamers, and they literally run through the picture-galleries and the cathedrals. But it is when they motor that they most reveal the nervous tension which fascinates while it frightens a leisurely traveler like myself.

For I am a jogger. Remembering the walks I took in my youth (which I still take) and even

the moderate pace I set in the good old bicycling days, I discovered long ago that one sees more if one does not advance at top speed. I have watched, on the screen, those energetic gentlemen who race along a prepared and segregated highway at the phenomenal rate of over three hundred miles an hour; and I have never ceased to wonder what is accomplished by such dexterity. For on what public road could further tests be made? It is one thing to hurry when no other cars are in competition; it is quite another to have the arena to one's self. The drivers leave their cars utterly exhausted; a microphone is held before their weary faces; they mumble a few incoherent words of satisfaction at the record they have made, and then probably fall into a heavy sleep, if not into a coma. Their sensational feat leaves me cold. I confess I am happy that they came through their ordeal without serious mishap; but I have never been sympathetic toward daredevils. They generally come to a tragic end—through their own recklessness.

When I set forth in a Ford runabout with Dick, who had generously consented to play the part of chauffeur, since I am unable to drive a car, we both decided that we would merely jog along. Not so slowly that we would be a menace to other

motorists; for the too-leisurely driver is almost as dangerous as the smart-alec speed maniac. We were out on the open road to see a section of our land that is beautiful and varied. Our time, happily, was our own; and the late August days, after an incredibly sweltering New York summer, were cool and bright.

That first morning was glimmering with gold. The earth sang. There was no haze. I was tasting delirious freedom for the first time in several years. I would not be sorry when the last faint line of Manhattan's skyscrapers disappeared. The city, with its ache and throb, was to be left behind for many days. The sultry streets would soon be forgotten. We would gradually come upon the beauty of the country, spring into its green arms with the skill of trapeze performers. We had made no rigid plans. We knew only that we were headed north; that we would be casual wayfarers as long as we wished to be. Maps? Oh, yes. But they were incidental. They were not to be slavishly followed. If a back road, not so glittering as the main highway, lured us, we would take it, and trust to the gods to reach a sunnier path if we so desired.

It takes a little smart traveling to get out of the pandemonium of New York. It seems sometimes as if the city would never end. Ours is a vast town

of mingled ugliness and beauty. Its uncountable arteries are forever in need of surgical treatment by civic physicians who work in battalions. The word so abhorred by motorists—"Detour"—is likely to be encountered anywhere. When we reached Harlem, there it was, staring us in the face, and a rough prospect greeted us. But why complain about such a trifling inconvenience? "There—are—greater problems in life—than this," I said haltingly to my companion as we went over the bumps. After all, any road would lead to the coveted Hutchinson Parkway, and we knew that the Merritt Road had been opened, and would meet the other like a long serpent that had crept into existence. Sure enough, there it lay ahead of us, with its neat suburban dwellings on either side of it.

As I looked at those shining houses, I could not help but wonder how their owners reached them without trouble; for one cannot spill one's self over the dividing grass-plots. To find the right path leading to their doors requires some knowledge. No doubt little maps are in existence to direct visitors. I hope so. They are such pretty houses, that seem to hold out an invitation; and one is grateful for the fact that architecture has improved in all our suburbs. Each dwelling vies with its neigh-

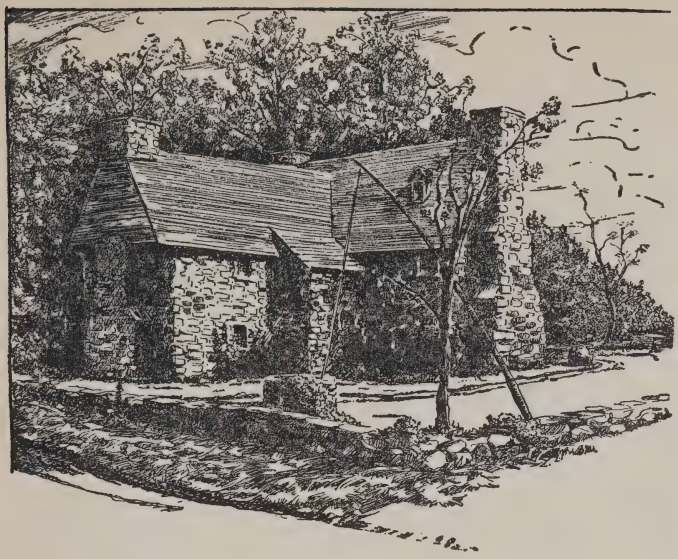
bors, putting on a more becoming bonnet, or revealing a finer façade than the rest. This charming rivalry continues indefinitely. Even the gas-stations along the way are little gems of beauty, built of stone. There has been a concerted movement to improve the appearance of such buildings, and the gospel is spreading. But why would it not be wise to hide them underground, with a mere signal post to reveal their whereabouts to the motorist? The latter could drive into a brief tunnel to replenish his gas, and come out triumphantly to the road again. In my ignorance, I must leave the problem of ventilation to the wise heads of engineers.

And if only our hot-dog stands could also be concealed! They disfigure the countryside with their hideous signs. One shudders at such legends, crudely printed, at every turn:

"EAT HOT DOGS!"
"EATS!"
"KOZY KOFFEE HOUSE!"
"TASTEE LUNCH!"

Ah! will a golden age ever come when outdoor advertising may be abandoned? Must not our virgin hillsides resent the insult of a gross sign being stabbed into their breasts, announcing Somebody's Soap or Anybody's Hotel? Have our women's clubs

ceased their laudable campaign against such effrontery? Nature, in all her green loveliness, must be sad over this despoiling of her beauty; yet what can the dear old Dame do? It is for man to save her. Yet as great cities are left behind, there is less, thank heaven, of this desecration. In time . . . But that is the whisper of a hopeful—and hopeless —optimist.



II

THERE is always a little thrill in crossing a State line; in finding one's self, in a jiffy, transported over an invisible border. Of course, abroad, you feel this more; for another language will be spoken, passports will have to be shown, and a new currency will be in evidence. But even in our own country, a difference seems to be evident.

Beyond the Connecticut line, winding roads at

once appear, bordered by stone fences, and there is a bit of light-opera aspect in the setting of the stage. The Nutmeg State has a trimness almost everywhere, a sort of freshly barbered appearance. Naturally, it has, too, its shabby and forlorn districts; but how seldom one sees an abandoned farm these days. Nor does one see that untidiness so evident in the past. That may be due to the fact that virtually every farmer owns a car, and gets about more. He observes, if he has any sight at all, how others have cleaned up their acre or more of ground, and he may be inspired to remedy the shoddy defects of his own plot of land. Neat fences have taken the place of dilapidated ones, and fresh paint is visible everywhere. Barns are not so often drooping against the horizon. They have been straightened up, and in their red or white new coats look like platoons of stalwart soldiers drilling in the sun.

Our cities might well emulate this bucolic decency. Even our foreign element, who have trekked to the country—and perhaps because they have had the wisdom to do so—soon display a vast pride in tidying up their meager property. Indeed, sometimes they are neater than their American neighbors who have remained long in a certain district

and grown careless of their ways. But slovenliness is no longer as apparent as it used to be. We were to see how it has almost vanished as we journeyed on. One cannot—unless one is a drone—live beside a clean road without striving to take on some of that cleanliness. Tidiness is as contagious as untidiness.

We had escaped from the trap of New York, and our first stop was to be Silvermine. Lunch there. We were already hungry. We knew of a tavern in this artists' colony. "I think we turn to the right," said the traveler with no sense of direction, as gently and as tactfully as he could. "No; I think it's left," said the traveler with a perfect sense of direction, in an equally gentle and tactful tone. But, of course, the second speaker was correct. "Our first dispute," he whispered, with a smile. We never had another argument about roads all the way. I know when I'm beaten.

A brick terrace, overhung with maple trees through which the golden sun drifted. Quiet Negro waiters. Good, homelike food. Gay umbrellas to shelter those outside the arch of leaves. No hurry. No bustle, as in any city place. The map brought out and laid on the table when the meal was over.

"Let's do some of the towns not far away," I suggested. "A summer theater may still be open, and we can see a play."

"You never can get away from the city," Dick said. "You're a confirmed guttersnipe."

"But these theaters are different," I tried to argue, in justification.

"All right. Guilford, or Clinton, then."

"You know as well as I do where they are," I answered; and inwardly felt I had won the first round.

All New England villages have a central green, around which the whole town seems to revolve. In early autumn, fairs are often held upon these greens, and farmers come from miles around, with their families; and a band plays, and there may even be dancing on the soft sod. Dwellings and churches and shops surround these greens, and there is the gentle bustle of small-town life. No one is in haste; and on a drowsy August afternoon there is a leisurely coming and going that appeals to a Manhattanite.

The oldest stone house in New England is in Guilford. It is set in a magnificent grove of trees. The pine rooms are spacious; the fireplace enormous. There is a loom room with a spinning-wheel; heavy beamed ceilings; massive four-poster

beds; hook rugs and quaint pictures on the walls. The restorers, like those in the Old World, have perhaps attempted to do too much in their desire to save the structure and furnish it as it was furnished in the olden days. But it is impressive. Before it is this legend:

THIS HOUSE BUILT A.D. 1639
WAS THE HOME OF
REV. HENRY WHITFIELD, B.D.,
FIRST MINISTER AND THE LEADER OF THE
FOUNDER OF GUILFORD
IN HONOR OF WHOM THIS TABLET IS
HERE PLACED ON THE OLDEST STONE
HOUSE IN NEW ENGLAND BY THE
CONNECTICUT SOCIETY OF
THE COLONIAL DAMES OF AMERICA,
1897

How often I have had it happen, in my ramblings, that a little god of luck follows me on my way. Two pieces of good fortune came to me while I was prowling about on this journey. One I shall tell of now—the other in its proper place.

I saw an old house in Guilford, overlooking the Sound, with moors—broad acres of them—in the near distance. It looked interesting. It proved doubly so when I spied a placard near the front door. I read it:

THIS HOUSE, BUILT FACING THE
GREEN IN 1770, WAS DRAWN HERE
BY 70 YOKE OF OXEN IN 1829. IT
WAS OWNED BY DR. LYMAN BEECHER,
FATHER OF
HENRY WARD BEECHER
&
HARRIET BEECHER STOWE
WHO WROTE UNCLE TOM'S CABIN

How I wished I could see the interior! Never afraid of making a modest request, for after all, the owner of a house can only refuse the favor of stepping in, I rang the bell. A pause. An irritating pause which soon became so long that I despaired. But I was not to be so easily driven away. I rang again. Presently the knob turned and a familiar figure stared at me. It was my old friend, Harry Durant, whom I had not seen in fifteen years. He recognized me at once. Yes, he owned the house, he told me as he led me over the threshold; and one of these days, when he is gone—may that be a long time hence!—it is going to become a home for writers in their old age. Well, if there should be a poet among them, how he will rejoice in the magic casements that open, not on the foam of perilous seas forlorn, but on those still moors and the calm waters of the Sound, facing Faulkner's Island. He

would get an inspiration with such a view; and all the short-story writers and novelists would doubtless envy him his habit of composing a daily poem. It is the kind of scene a versifier would never weary of; and as I looked at that dreaming expanse, I wanted to remain for hours, if not for days. A few ships with blowing sails were in the distance; a gull flew by, like a speck on the huge area, and there wasn't a bit of noise to break the silence. I went away with no little regret. And I thought, "Maybe I'll come back some day, when the world and its mad ways have grown too much for me—come back as a permanent guest if they'll let me. Who knows?"

In Guilford, too, is Governor Leete's cellar, and before it is an inscription which reads:

> In this Cellar of William Leete,
> then Governor of New Haven Colony,
> Edward Whelley and Wm. Goffe,
> two of the judges of Charles I
> of England were concealed and fed
> from Gov. Leete's table,
> June 11—20 1661.

And a little beyond it is what is known as the Black House. A strange frame building. This house was painted black by Nicholas Loysel, the owner,

a French refugee from the Island of Guadaloupe, when he learned of the execution of Louis XVI of France on January 21, 1793. It was erected in 1761 by Levi Hubbard. The black paint is now almost worn away; but the thought endures which prompted this mournful reminder of the past.

Fitz Greene Halleck, the poet, once spent some time in Guilford, and in such quiet surroundings he wrote some of his best verse.

There was no movement then to turn a chapel into a playhouse for summer visitors. The pews have been retained as seats—why not?—and a gong is rung during the entr'acte to bring the audience back. The stage, of course, is where the pulpit once stood; and perhaps our modern dramatists preach as good sermons as those uttered by the long-dead ministers. At least there is no sense of sacrilege. We had gone into this playhouse, it is true, when no performance was taking place. There was that same hush of a church on a week-day; but what if an audience, in the evening, fluttered programs, as congregations once fluttered hymn-books?

It was at Clinton that we struck the last week of a summer theater, and witnessed one of Noel Coward's plays. It went with gusto, and the scenery was almost equal to that of a metropolitan production. These little playhouses which have sprung

up everywhere are fine places for tryouts. Managers come from far and near to see what is being offered, and the local critics are as astute as those in New York. The best actors, as well as many unknown, are glad to take engagements with summer stock companies. Salaries may be small, and the constant change of bill may be arduous for them; but they are all helping to revive the road. Many people have discovered that the motion-pictures are slipping. Those phantom figures on the screen will never have the appeal of living human beings behind a proscenium arch. They are like artificial flowers compared to a thriving garden; and even Bingo cannot lure the public like a good play admirably, or even tolerably, well acted. And one thinks of the employment thus given to players who would otherwise languish in town, awaiting the approach of the regular metropolitan season. Actors are like gipsies. They love to roam, and it must be pleasant to study a part under green trees rather than in a city room.

Pine Orchard was not far away. We had heard that it had been christened "the little Newport of Connecticut." And sure enough, it had its miniature cliff walk, if not the fashionable aspect of the haughty Rhode Island resort. But who thinks much of the parade of fashion nowadays? Here was a

calm community that evidently had little thought beyond enjoying its golden summer season. Unpretentious dwellings dotted its shore-line, and one could walk along the modest cliff, watching the sail-boats on the twinkling blue water, or take strolls through shadowy lanes. The curving bay is full of life and color, yet there is a sense of peace everywhere. I remembered that an old friend had rented a cottage here for the summer, and when we knocked upon her door late in the afternoon, her first words were, "You'll stop for dinner, of course." It was Christie Macdonald, of light-opera fame, whose house was already overflowing with guests; but there always seems to be room for others at her hospitable board. We went in, very hungry. We came out, two hours later, refreshed for our jaunt to Old Lyme, where we planned to spend the night.

III

I HAVE never met any one who has visited Old Lyme who did not like it. Its praises had been sung to me by many friends. I had never been there, and as I had heard nothing but the best things of it, I feared I might be disappointed, as one is often disappointed in a celebrity or a much advertised personality. Would it live up to its sweet-sounding name? Would it be as romantic as I had often pictured it in my mind? I knew that

many people of distinction and taste had become enamored of its charm; that artists of all kinds had sought it as a haven; that there was a conservative element there, too, who looked upon it as something just this side of paradise. So I moved toward it through the darkness with all my senses quickened.

I do not happen to care for motoring at night, and I was particularly regretful that we should enter the town at an hour when I could get only a vague impression of it. Roadways and houses, fences and trees take on an artificial appearance as I pass through dimness. I prefer to get my bearings in the broad light of day; to reach a certain destination in sunlight, not starlight. Only, there were not even stars that evening, much less a moon.

The shadows thickened as we drove along, and there was a feeling of imminent rain. How pleasant the lamplight looks in the cottages one passes at such a time; but on the other hand how desolate a completely dark abode appears—desolate and depressing.

We might stop, I told Dick, at the first "tourists accommodated" sign we managed to discover; yet that would be foolish, since we could easily make Old Lyme at a decently early hour. So we went

on under the arches of trees, around red barns that took on the aspect of cardboard toy-shop buildings. They lost that solidity I had observed in daylight; they were thin and frail now, as if they might tumble into our laps, delicate structures that would be sure to fall if a heavy gust of wind arose. Even the strong and enduring stone walls were as papier-mâché, I thought. We might go through them and not be harmed at all! But I knew Dick's place at the wheel was sure; that he was one to take no chances in uncertain light, particularly when he had such a nervous individual as myself by his side.

I was glad when groups of houses began to loom up. Soon we would be entering Old Lyme, where a good inn awaited us, with good beds.

The keeper of the tavern said, when we had asked him if we should lock our car, "Well, I've lived here all my life, and I've never known anything to be stolen." So, unlocked, our runabout remained on the gravel path, as there was no room for it in the garage. We were getting deeper, you see, into New England, and many times we were to regain our faith in human beings. Racketeers and pilferers were to be forgotten up here. We had left the hive of Manhattan, where an unlocked car was unthinkable. We were already in the midst of

people of integrity—country folk who would say "Good morning!" to every passing stranger. Here were grace and decency and politeness—qualities that seem to have vanished elsewhere.

Into the friendly tavern we went, with only our overnight bags. As I hugged my pillow, I heard the pleasant patter of the rain. I know of few more comfortable sensations than to have beaten a storm to one's door, and then to be in one's bed, safe and sound, while the rain races across the roof with its thundering battalions. Old Lyme, so far, was all I had hoped it would be.

The next morning was dripping with sunlight. As I went into the big dining-room for breakfast, I felt I might be in some English inn, as I saw the dear, sweet old ladies and gentlemen. The former had mounds of white hair, arranged with no regard, of course, for the current fashion. They wore top-knots and amber beads and black alpaca dresses —vanishing types. They all had a curious distinction. They were serene in their indifference to style. At once I loved them all. No dieting for them, so far over the hill of life! No, indeed. They partook of cereal, eggs, and pancakes, with generous helpings of maple syrup; they powdered their berries with succulent sugar, and were not afraid of a second cup of coffee, bless them. One old

gentleman, alone in a corner, actually fell asleep over his hearty morning meal, and awakened only when another dish was placed before him. What a novel Arnold Bennett or Louis Bromfield could have evolved merely by looking about at these ancient, quiet folk! What stories lay hidden in their lives, I wondered, and how happy they seemed in their twilight days. The room was warmer for their presence. They seemed established, a very part of the old building; what hotel proprietors call "the regulars." And Dick and I felt like rank outsiders, using this tavern merely as a tent for a night.

We had thought of having a light lunch put up, which we would eat by the roadside—just a few sandwiches, hard-boiled eggs and milk. But we had no container for the latter. "Oh," said our pretty waitress, "I'll lend you a thermos bottle, if you'll bring it back—sometime." Imagine any one making such an offer in New York! The remark seemed like something in a dream. We thanked our benefactress, and compromised on a common-or-garden milk container. And again we heard our waitress's voice. "Don't you wish some more toast, or pancakes, or anything?" she inquired, with all the personal hospitality of a hostess. I tell you it is delightful to travel in New England. And farther . . .

I rang up some friends in Old Lyme. "What?

You're here, and didn't let us know you were coming?" answered the cheerful voice of Harriet Milliken. "Well, come right over and spend to-day and to-night with us. We've plenty of room for you both. And we'll show you around. I won't take no for an answer. We're having a beach luncheon, and a tea, and you've got to meet all our friends, and . . ."

We went. How could we resist? Old Lyme was taking us to its heart. Was it any wonder, I thought, that people seeking escape from New York, against the perilous times that may lie ahead of us all, are anxious to settle on a plot of earth, no matter how small, in a community like this? And they are doing it. Perhaps they think of Thoreau, that wise philosopher, who said that a half acre is enough for any man; that two chairs are sufficient in a house; for if extra guests come, the host can always sit upon the floor.

Americans are anxious to get out of the crowded cities, to establish themselves in a rural setting and strive to till the soil. We heard, a long time ago, of the gospel of "the simple life." Such an existence was smiled upon in more prosperous times. Now, in these uncertain days, town dwellers are beginning to think seriously of it again; and they are the people of wisdom. "A roaring fire—and a

friend or two," isn't a bad line from *The Mermaid Tavern* to carve over one's hearth in some quiet neighborhood. A radiator in a city flat is a sorry affair compared to the brightness of a fireplace out in the open country. A family cannot cluster about the former; but lured by a singing hearth-flame they can be happy with its bright companionship. There will be a greater exodus from town life in America as the years march on; and that will be good for the crowded cities, and good for the spacious country also. There will of necessity have to be a redistribution of population, as well as a redistribution of other things.

The ancient McCurdy house in Old Lyme was built long ago. It became the property of Mrs. Evelyn McCurdy Salisbury. Here Washington was entertained in 1776, on April 9th; and Lafayette July 27, 1778. The north chamber is preserved as it was at that time. They also stopped at the stately and picturesque Humphrey Pratt Tavern in Old Saybrook. A reception was given to the Marquis de Lafayette in the ball-room, which hangs on chains. How gay the dancing must have been in such a room!

Old Lyme has long been a favorite spot for artists. The William Noyes house, built in 1818, was the residence of Miss Florence Griswold, and

was known as "the home of the artists." It became celebrated, after Childe Hassam, William Howe, Gifford Beale, Henry R. Poore, Edward Rook and Alphonse Jongers stayed under its roof. Now Abram Poole, the famous portrait painter, has bought a place in Old Lyme, and has come to love the country all about, as an artist would be sure to do.

The Connecticut River, leading to the Sound, runs through Old Lyme; and on its banks I found a wonderful gentleman who lives on an old government lightship with his charming wife. He has built a narrow trestle from the shore; and when he feels like being a landlubber—which is seldom —he can make use of it. Of course, he was once a seafaring man, an explorer. His name? Sloan Danenhower, who in 1931 went to the Arctic regions with Sir Hubert Wilkins' expedition—in a submarine! He has, of course, never lost his love of the sea; and I can think of no pleasanter home than his on this lightship. Its decks are decorated with boxes of geraniums and petunias, and the cabins are little gems of loveliness—the expression of Mrs. Danenhower's taste. We sat on the clean, cool deck and talked. My host told me that Napoleon was not ignorant of the submarine; he had one built in 1776, and it went after a British frig-

ate; but he was averse to its use in time of war, considering it not according to Hoyle—not cricket. Fulton built one, after Napoleon, in 1811, and once crossed the Seine under water. We could see the still marshland in the offing as the Captain told me these things I had never heard of. Would that men to-day, I thought, would feel as Napoleon had felt. But a new kind of brutality is in the world, and over and under us are fresh perils, in the event of another war.

There are enchanting back roads, never crowded, all around Old Lyme, and as we took our way along them, we saw handsome stone houses as solid and enduring as the New England spirit. The primitive Chester Ferry, where one must sound a horn to call it, takes motorists from a snug inlet to Essex. The boat operates every day from 7 A. M. to 7 P. M., and there is room for three automobiles. William Gillette, the actor, lived near this spot, and owned so much property that he had a miniature railroad built and dashed about his vast acres with childlike fervor. The tracks are still there, I was informed; but I could not get a glimpse of them, since a forbidding sign—"Stop Here"—discourages a prying visitor like me.

Hamburg Cove is not far away. It is surrounded by gentle hills, which form what might be called

its backyard, and small craft of all kinds dance upon the water. Truly a foreign-looking place, quaint enough to please a painter. "But its name," Dick said, smiling; "Hamburg! I'll bet you that during the war there was an hysterical movement to change it. Some patriotic citizens probably wanted it renamed 'Liberty Corners.' " But neither of us ventured to ask about this.

We learned of other matters, however, of far more importance. For instance: that Portland, just opposite Middletown, in the old days supplied most of the stone for the New York brownstone fronts that stood in such serried ranks in our city. The quarries seemed inexhaustible; and curbstones were sent to far-away New Orleans too. A thriving business was the result.

We heard also that Bride Brook was so named because there is a legend that as far back as the winter of 1646, a couple wished to be married, and could not get over the stream because of the harsh weather. The magistrate being absent, word was sent to Governor John Winthrop at New London. He arrived on the opposite shore, and joined the romantic couple in the bonds of matrimony by reading the service from his side of the brook. One takes the story for what it is worth; but it is probably true.

Old Lyme keeps its fragrance, upholds its rich traditions. It abominates change, and some one told me that it resents, like an aristocratic dowager, any interference in its town meetings. Newcomers must conform to the old order, the ancient way of running things, or they are promptly put in their proper place.

In this fine old town, we saw a mellow sunset as we sat in the beautiful gardens that surround Mr. Magee's house. Maid Marian phlox and euphorbia were all around us, behind the high beach hedge, and there wasn't a sound to disturb the peace of the late afternoon. Later, a moon like a golden medallion rose, with a single star gleaming close to it. Beneath this beauty, Captain Danenhower's lightship rocked gently in the river. "In such a night," I said to myself.

IV

IF Old Lyme lived up to its name and reputation, I am sorry to say that Old Mystic didn't. It seemed like a poor relation of the former. But the country all around it is quite as lovely. The green persuasion of its hills delighted us, and there were neat little boxlike houses on the outskirts of the town as up-and-coming as the younger generation, fresh and new and sparkling in the sun.

How seldom one sees any rickety fences these days, any dilapidated structures sadly in need of

repair. I do believe we encountered only one abandoned farm in all our trip, and it stood out like a sore thumb. A row of hollyhocks, like soldiers drilling in the sun, make a fine background for a white dwelling down the road; and soon those who have observed it have likewise planted similar flowers. More color is evident everywhere. Blue shutters can do wonders for some plain white cottage; and a fan doorway with a brass knocker is like a jewel that gives a final sparkling touch.

We were already beginning to forget newspapers and dates. One lives, perforce, on a schedule in a place like New York. At ten o'clock, so-and-so; at two thus; and don't forget dinner at eight, with Mrs. X. A perpetual round of things that must be done. And so, to be able to move over these flowing roads at any pace we pleased, gave us a sense of large leisure and ease. But we knew that the city could do without us, as we could do without it. No mail was to be forwarded, since we never knew where we might be at a given time; and to seek out a post-office for general-delivery letters had no place in our scheme of things.

"We might as well slip into Rhode Island," Dick suggested, "and see some more of Connecticut later on. What do you say?"

I left it to him, as he glanced at a sign-post. I

knew that only the very stupid could get lost in these days of clear directions; for every road, no matter how obscure, is dotted with information.

The map says Here; and the map says There,
As we jog along without a care.
It's good to forget a railroad station;
To saunter with no destination.

The road is smooth, the highway broad,
And bright is the smile of the goldenrod.
Enough that we amble along all day.
Content with the peace of the open way.

O far is the town with its rush and roar;
This is the road we had hungered for.
The map says Here; and the map says There,
But we jog along without a care.

There was to be nothing at Westerly that we cared particularly to see. It is just another town in a row of towns; but Watch Hill, beautifully situated, with windmills looming up, held us for a long afternoon. Sail-boats were shining in the harbor, and the motors parked along the banks seemed to glitter and shine with a greater luster than elsewhere. Typical seashore villas, some of them radiating a past elegance, flashed and shone; for Watch Hill is second only to Newport in its smart aspect. People of wealth and fashion from all parts

of the country come here summer after summer, and the bathing-beach is restricted, as it always is in such a place. There is a little stretch of moorland, with the ruins of a fort upon it, and here we delayed, preferring its quiet mood to that of the town itself. There was a great deal of bustle in the main street, and the largest hotel did not tempt us with its ponderous beckoning. We chose, rather, a simple porch on which to have our simple lunch. We were aware that in a resort like this, where the season is necessarily short, prices would be higher than our purse could afford. Our disappointment was keen, however, when, at the place we had selected, which had advertised spaghetti, there was none to offer us. They were "just out," they sadly informed us. For spaghetti is not a New England dish; only occasional tourists call for it, we were told; and a supply, even in a restaurant where it is the *spécialté de la maison,* soon runs out. So we had to be content with fish-cakes. We were not sorry for the substitution. As the wine of the country in France is generally the best, so, all through New England, one can never make a mistake in ordering fish-cakes. They are truly delicious.

We jogged on to Narragansett, where windmills were again to be seen. There is a great circle of

petunias as one enters this once busy resort, and an ocean drive that is wonderful—if one looks only at the water, and not toward the rows of hotels and houses that must have been erected when American architecture was at its lowest ebb. The eye wearies of their ugly monotony.

Through an *allée* of splendid trees we moved toward Point Judith, and on either side of this road, how many closed mansions we saw. Departed glory. The spirit of the past came back to me; for long ago Narragansett Pier was a stately, formal spa, as dignified as Saratoga in its golden era. The beach was—and is—incomparable and it drew many from the precinct of its neighbor, Newport. Attempts have been made for a return to its pristine splendor; but times have changed. If it sparkles less now, it is not alone in its semi-tatterdemalion state. The crown that once adorned it is not so straight on its head now. It is like one of the old guard dreaming of cotillions with their favors; of waltzes and quadrilles, which have been superseded by the Lambeth Walk. And yet one knows of joyous seasons still spent there. Loyal visitors, grown older now, may prefer its present atmosphere, its slower tempo. If some of the sprightliness is gone, that does not greatly matter. Myself, I like it as it is. Violins are sweeter than brass bands. And that may be why

some of the old Narragansett set have moved a little way off to a place with the charming name—which it lives up to—of Peacedale.

Point Judith has always been associated in my mind with *mal de mer,* for when one took the boat to Boston, one knew by the rocking of the vessel, that the lighthouse was in sight; that opposite it the ocean rose and fell in frenzied fury. If passengers escaped illness they were fortunate; but even those not taken sick were glad when the rough seas subsided. The beacon stands on a narrow strip of land, warning mariners of their danger, and its great eye has never ceased to gleam through the years.

As we moved along, I could not help wondering why seaside cottages invariably depress me. They are dreary enough when they are opened and show some signs of life; when they are closed, their windows looking like empty sockets, they are drearier still. A few, with their cupolas askew, and their lightning-rods dangerously disarranged, seemed like tired and tattered old monarchs, striving to hold their place in the world, and not quite able to do so. Strong winds had worn their strength away. Some of their shingles mingled with the sand. Their heads were hoary with age, their bodies bent with the struggle to keep on existing.

We fared on to Kingston, which was founded in 1700; and in such an old town there are many fascinating houses, with name plates on the doors, proud of their ripe age. Long ago Kingston was known as "Little Rest"—a title that might be misconstrued; for there would seem to be plenty of time to rest here. There was a church spire on a high hill as we left this community behind us. It stood like a pale ghost in a congregation of green trees; or a semicolon in the long sentence of the checker-board countryside. We were so taken with the dreaming beauty about us that we had a roadside lunch under a gnarled apple tree, and let the world go by. It was a gorgeous day again—what luck we were having with the weather! We lingered in our comfortable spot for two or more hours, watching other cars, like black shining beetles, hustling along. Let them hustle!

One seldom sees a pedestrian; for no provision has been made for him along the glittering roadways. Every one rides, every one glides. Where are the old energetic legs man used to exercise not so long ago? But there were bicyclists here and there, and I thought of the century-runs we used to make on our wheels when I was a lad. It was bracing exercise, up hill and down dale, and we thought little of our lusty achievement. The factory hands

and mechanics who haven't yet come to the delight of owning a car—and these are few and far between—reach their places of employment on their bicycles; a slower means of locomotion, of course; but it gets them there. If they are looked upon as a nuisance by the more speedy motorists, they are not to be pushed out of the way. But an occasional pedestrian—he is considered a menace indeed, with no rights at all, poor fellow.

The ferry from Jamestown takes the traveler to Newport, that old city with its famous Cliff Walk, along which the many mansions stand in all their exclusive elegance.

The approach to the fashionable city over the water gives no indication of the beauty that lies ahead. Newport seems to be a community of low roofs, flaunting no skyscrapers as other American towns, no matter how small, are ever anxious to do. It is not impressive, viewed from the boats; in fact, it appears dowdy and dingy, and seeing it first from this angle, one might wonder why it has been so exalted. The scene that greets the eye reminds one of those old, old engravings of New York, when the metropolis of America was a mere shambles of sheds and dwellings and warehouses and piers—a flat, sprawling line of buildings of no architectural beauty or importance. But when one

enters the town itself, chartered as a city as long ago as 1784, one beholds grandeur on a great scale.

Bellevue Avenue is a broad and beautiful thoroughfare, lined with huge trees and hedges, behind which are gardens that prosper many months of the year, because of the wonderful salt air, and a dampness like that of England.

Other streets in the main part of the town are very narrow and crooked; but they possess a romantic charm. Thames Street is only twenty feet wide, but along it are many eighteenth-century houses. Here are grace and distinction. The dimness is restful after the glaring brightness of the shore-line one has passed through. A snug city, this, in its downtown section, reminding one of a quaint old lady who has gathered her dark shawl over her shoulders and sits nodding in the afternoon. She forgets about the forts that surround her—Fort Adams, Fort Wetherill and Fort Greble. She may remember Lime Rock Lighthouse, for many years in charge of Mrs. Ida Lewis Wilson, who became famous for the number of lives she saved. She knows about Goat Island, where Fort Walcott stands, with its United States torpedo station and torpedo factory; and she knows that on Coasters Harbor Island are a United States Naval Training Station and a War College. Such facts,

perhaps, give her a feeling of protection; and she hears rumors that often the handsome young officers, in their white linen uniforms, are entertained on shore in summer by the wealthy members of the colony. But she doesn't care a hoot

The United States Life Saving Station at Narragansett Pier

about this. She does delight in the fact that the three-mile Cliff Walk is always open to any and everybody; that the most humble visitor or native may walk along this path and stare at Marble House, where Mrs. O. H. P. Belmont once lived in splendor; at the residences of General and Mrs.

Cornelius Vanderbilt, Mrs. Ogden Goelet, Perry Belmont and a host of others whose names, she recalls, are forever appearing in the gossip columns of the "society" reporters. She has not forgotten the old State House, which was finished in 1743, and used as a hospital during the War of Independence. She knows about the synagogue on Touro Street, erected in 1762, and said to be the oldest in the United States. She could tell you that one of the early rabbis was Isaac Touro, a Jew of Dutch birth, after whom a street and park have been named here. She dreams, as she nods, of the monuments to William Ellery Channing and Matthew Calbraith Perry; of the Channing House on Mary Street, built in 1751, now used for a Children's Home; of the first newspaper of Newport published in 1732 by James Franklin, a brother of Benjamin Franklin, and of the fact that James Franklin's son, also named James, founded the present Newport *Mercury*.

Yes, she has many things to think about; of the changes that have taken place all around her. For she is an ancient dame, dating as far back as 1593. And if she is a little tired of the hilarity that goes on, even yet, she smiles tolerantly as the rich disport themselves at Bailey's Beach, with its gaily colored umbrellas set like bright mushrooms in the

sand, and are photographed by the newspaper cameramen out to take a shot at the débutantes and the white-haired dowagers. Let them romp while they may, she seems to whisper. And she sees that somehow the parade goes on; that innovations continue, like the summer theater; that a diminutive imitation of the Diamond Horseshoe at the Metropolitan Opera House arranges itself in the boxes for each performance. She has seen people come and go; she has watched fortunes diminish, and climbers scampering up the social ladder. Wouldn't they be happier if they remained as placid as she? No; they must break their ankles on the rungs; and sometimes they must fall ignominiously, and then wonder why they strove so hard to reach the top. The top of what?

They tried, no doubt, to get into the Reading Room—where there is not a single book! Or perhaps it was the Clam Bake Club they sought to enter, so that they might meet and come to know the elect. "Dear me! dear me!" she says to herself as she nods on. "So much effort, so much foolish ambition. We're out of the way, up here on Aquidneck Island, more difficult of access now that the boats no longer run. That keeps many people away. But the socially ambitious still long for our Casino, where the tennis tournaments are held;

and they want to be seen on the Ocean Drive, which encircles our south-western peninsula for nine miles. They even wish to purchase, if they can, some of our empty palaces, full of memories of an old and glowing period. Let them come, for all of me, and see how welcome they will be!"

And as the twilight deepens, she pulls her shawl more securely around her shoulders, and nods on. It was dark when we left the old lady's side, and sought the first house that bore a sign, "Tourists Accommodated." There was an autumnal touch in the air, and we were very tired after our long day of sight-seeing. On a back road, in restful contrast to the grand old cold mansions we had looked at, we found the very door we wanted. A simple little cottage. It looked inviting and warm, and it seemed to beckon us.

V

IT is a tragic commentary on these times that in many villages and towns, almost every other house puts forth a brief legend that travelers are welcome. Money is scarce; something must be done to replenish the family purse. The motorist is a godsend. And so an extra bedroom or two is fitted up for passing strangers. No meals need be served save breakfast, and this can be as simple or as lavish as the guests desire.

There is so much competition that each host must keep his rooms as tidy as that of his neighbors in the same business. In all our jaunting we found things spic and span. The bathroom might have to be shared with other lodgers; but that was not surprising, in view of the low rates asked. Only a dollar a night is the usual fee, with the morning meal extra. Such clean towels and linen, and such immaculate bathrooms! And such pleasant faces to greet one after a long tour on the road. Often we were the only guests; but if there were others, they were as friendly as the owners of the house, eager to tell us, in the frank, almost childlike American fashion, of their own travels; and we enjoyed their candor and always listened to their stories. Nice agreeable people. But we'll probably never see them again.

And there are the cabins, often fitted up with fresh curtains, and with running water and electric lights. More privacy. A trifle more expensive, though the rates vary. Like little tents *de luxe*. A general meeting-place on the lawn in the morning. Cheery greetings. More bustle. Sometimes we longed to linger at such places; but there was so much to see farther on. But an extra hour or two —that was always possible.

At the cottage outside Newport there was a re-

minder of the plush and bead curtains so prevalent in the 'nineties. I hadn't seen a painted plaque since I was a boy; yet here was one—a lady with a plumed hat, in all her glory. Sea-shells on a what-not; a wooden hatrack; a fringed cover over the upright piano; a miniature palm-tree growing in a tub out on the veranda, the course of its spreading limbs directed by strings nailed into the ceiling. But how happy a family this was, living amid its cheap elegance, getting rumors of the outside world from the tourists who came to their door in "the season"—and then probably snowbound in winter listening only to the chatter of the radio rather than the more personal talk of motorists.

It is illuminating and interesting to look at the register in such a tourist house. Three girls traveling together—from Kansas. The elderly man and his wife—you can tell that they were old by the way the pen faltered on the page. They were from some little town in Canada, perhaps, or Oklahoma; and one thinks, if one is sentimental, that this may have been the last long journey they were ever to take—except the inevitable one we all must face.

Country people, as a rule, are gracious, simple, and polite; and if you are the first down to breakfast, you will gain knowledge of the uneventful

lives they lead so close to the highways. The wife who prepares your meal may tell you of a recent trip *she* took a week ago—a day off, to see a movie in the nearest town; or a necessary visit to a dentist not far away. Little items that mean so much to her.

One such hostess told us that only the day before she and her husband had run away from their humdrum labor, because it happened to be the twentieth anniversary of their marriage. Ah! were they themselves guests at another "tourists accommodated" cottage, with that delicious feeling that goes with playing truant? And did they, like us, listen to another garrulous hostess's matutinal conversation? Their first holiday in many years; but she felt they deserved it. One became stale, staying so long at home. We let her chat on, as we drank our orange-juice and coffee; for wasn't *I* going to tell of *my* trip when I got back to New York?

I had never been through Fall River, Massachusetts—merely known it as a place where the Boston-New York boats stopped, and as the scene of the famous Borden murder case. As we approached its anything but beautiful environs, I said to Dick, "Hideous as this city may be, we must stop and see if we can find Lizzie Borden's house. Years ago,

Harvey O'Higgins and I said we'd come up; but we never did—you know how such plans have a way of falling through—and now he's dead. I may never be near Fall River again. It may not interest you; but I remember, as a child, hearing of this murder, which has never been solved; and in my simplicity I told grown-ups that of course Miss Lizzie was innocent because—well, wasn't she a Sunday-school teacher?"

At which Dick laughed; and then I rapidly rehearsed the main facts in one of the most absorbing mysteries in the annals of American crime. He was so enthralled that he, too, wanted to find the house where a double murder had been committed on a sultry August morning 'way back in 1892.

I inquired, on the fringes of the town, of a young woman behind the counter of a notion shoppe. She had never heard of Lizzie Borden. To repay her for her ignorance, I bought a handful of picture post-cards—though heaven knows I didn't want any souvenirs of this place—and crossed the street to a druggist's.

Yes, the clerk, though young, knew all about Miss Lizzie; he'd read every word he could find which treated of the ancient case; and, yes, he knew the address. It used to be No. 92 Second Street; it's now 230. "The barn's torn down," he

informed me, "where Lizzie said she went to find a bit of iron or tin for fishing-tackle; and the fence and the tree in front of the house aren't there any longer; otherwise they say it's about the same."

Profuse thanks, on my part. I was all excitement. A most intelligent young man, this. Why, he even knew by heart the rhyme that some wag had invented during the trial:

> Lizzie Borden took an ax
> And gave her mother forty whacks;
> When she saw what she had done
> She gave her father forty-one.

And now I must mention the second bit of luck I had on our way. As we stopped our runabout before No. 230, to make assurance doubly sure I asked a young man who happened to be passing if this was in fact the house I sought.

"Yes, indeed," he replied, stopping. "Are you interested?"

"I should say so. I've come a long way to see it. The Borden case was always, to me, the most enthralling one I ever heard of."

He looked me over; and then, "My father lives here now. Would you like to go inside?"

Would I like to go inside!

And through that same door that Lizzie had

used many times, I followed my engaging guide. Into those rooms, not a partition of which has been changed after forty-six years, and where for days at a time Lizzie and her sister Emma, her father and stepmother, would sit without speaking to one another after a family altercation.

I saw the dining-room where that unbelievable breakfast had been eaten on that unbearably hot summer morning—mutton soup, bananas, some kind of bread or cakes—sugar cakes or johnny-cakes —and coffee! I saw that living-room which was to become poor Mr. Borden's death-room; and the guest-room upstairs to which Mrs. Borden had walked, as into a trap. Our kindly host brought forth the ghastly photographs the police had taken immediately after the bodies were discovered; and I turned with horror from the mutilated victims, lying in such grotesque positions, she on the floor, he on the haircloth sofa, his feet in Congress boots stretched out. And it was explained how the murderer might have stood behind the partition and crashed down with the fatal ax, and no blood would fall on his or her garments.

All I could think of was: after that breakfast, in that unhappy household, in this drab city on a suffocating August morning, in this plain, dreary frame-house, anybody might commit murder. The

whole sordid and sorry story, if you wish to follow it in detail, may be found in Edmund Pearson's fine record, *Trial of Lizzie Borden* (Adv.). It's better than any mystery novel ever written.

As we went back to our car, our kind young friend said to me, smiling: "Well, I wish you could have seen your face when I took you into the house! Gee!"

I knew then that my eyes must have been popping out of my head. Fall River may be neither beautiful nor interesting; but I shall always remember it was the place where one of its good citizens gave me a delirious half-hour of gruesome browsing about.

Done with murders, I was glad of the bright cool August morning—so different from that day Miss Lizzie had known—as we moved on to New Bedford. We remembered that it was in this old picturesque whaling town that the trial had been held, so we couldn't quite get away from memories of the stoical lady of long ago. But soon she was forgotten in our enjoyment of the golden world around us, of all the growing hosts of summer—grass and clover and opulent trees in the full tide of their glory. How different from the pavements and boxlike dwellings we had just left in the town; yet in the cemetery there Miss Lizzie was sleep-

ing under soft turf, at the feet of the parents she had been suspected of killing! And the sister to whom she had not spoken for years before her death, lay beside her, equally calm and oblivious of the rushing seasons. A nice little family party, that in the silent graveyard. Fall River has almost forgotten Miss Lizzie, wearied, I imagine, of her very name. Strange are the patterns of our lives, mysterious are the forces that lead us back sometimes to our very starting places.

We liked New Bedford; but all these small American cities have become obsessed with following the metropolitan example of one-way streets. The traffic regulations are as rigidly enforced as in New York. It is as if there were a conspiracy all over the country to make things as difficult as possible for the motorist; to force him, in small but ambitious localities, to conform to those rules absolutely necessary in a vast city like Manhattan, but hardly called for in less congested areas. We became confused in one or two instances, because of the many restrictions, and actually lost our way through no fault of our own. Why not, New Bedford and other cities of similar size, follow the metropolitan plan of numbering your streets instead of naming them? Or, if you must cling to names, simplify the matter for everybody by utiliz-

ing a system. For example, follow the letters of the alphabet, as in Washington, or have, after an Abbott Street, a Benjamin Street; then a Claremont Street, a Delany Street, and so on. Prettier than merely A street, B street and so on, and just as practical. Visitors at least would be grateful for such an innovation.

There was once great wealth in New Bedford, and the old residences are reminders of sadly distant days when men built with a long future in view, with a solid belief that what they established would surely endure. Fine, square mansions were the result—structures set back from flowing lawns; balconies and trellised porches; old dreaming gardens; tree-lined thoroughfares. A beautiful, peaceful town; yet in its business section full of that energy one finds in almost every American city of its size, the pleasant bustle of trade, the hum of active crowds, as in a small English market town.

New Englanders are very firm sometimes. We had arrived early in New Bedford and there was no boat to Nantucket until the afternoon; so we decided to have a light lunch put up, and eat it at Fairhaven not far away; but the proprietor of the little restaurant rubbed his head and wasn't sure that he could do this for us. The waitresses were all busy with preparations for the midday

meal, and "he didn't see as how" he could put them on an extra job, slight as it might be. There was no arguing with him. Why didn't we take our short drive and come back and eat at a table, he wanted to know. I am one who is easily persuaded in such a situation, and though I longed for an *al fresco* meal, I weakly gave in. Dick, when we were alone, mildly protested at my weakness. Surely there were plenty of other restaurants where our simple request would have been granted. I was a weakling to give in; but having promised that we would return I felt that we should. The result was the one poor meal we had served to us, and Dick's revenge was complete. I admit that he didn't crow over me. He merely smiled in a sort of I-told-you-so manner, as glumly I partook of lukewarm food followed by jello, which I do not happen to care for at all.

But our drive through Fairhaven had been pleasant, watching some lads at a school practising football under a coach who seemed to know his business. It was here, I recalled, that Miss Emma Borden had gone for a visit when her parents were slain; but we didn't seek out *that* house. Were we never to have the Borden family erased from our minds?

We found our place on the dock for the Nan-

tucket boat—one must be sure, in the season, to do this well in advance. The fare, I must tell the reader, is not cheap—$6.60 for our runabout, and $4.20 for ourselves; but the trip takes four and a half hours, and is well worth the price. As we awaited our turn I noticed the many small craft in the harbor; and ships being of the feminine gender—I never quite knew why—they had names like *Nettie B* or *Sally M.* Who are—or who were—these ladies, so charmingly celebrated and romantically remembered? Were they beloved of the owner of the craft, or were they members of his family who, in a moment of affection and sentiment, were thus complimented? So an author frequently dedicates a book to some one; but to have a ship named after one—ah! that is something! At least it lives longer than most volumes.

There is something fascinating about seeing a lot of fast-running motors stationary on a boat, being transported to another shore. There they stand, in serried ranks, motionless and rather forlorn in their impotence, like horses champing to be off, unable to take a single stride. Helpless, they must bide their time. Impatiently they must long for the moment when they can swiftly move again and reveal their power; but for a little while the bark is their master.

There are private rooms on these boats where passengers may retire; but Dick and I preferred the upper deck, with a soft breeze blowing, and a vast space all around us. Our first stop was to be Wood's Hole, and in such places the townspeople come out for the event of the day, and stand on the wharf watching the clever manipulation of the landing. How beguiling a small harbor can be, and Wood's Hole, cozy and snug, with houses covered with vines, greener than vines usually are, is beautifully placed. A small island, with rocks drifting out from it on two sides, seems to curve like arms about to embrace the gulls that fly to these rocks for an instant's rest. But if only those public buildings in the background would hide themselves behind a veil of mist! They mar the otherwise peaceful scene.

I like to lean on a rail and see with what precision and skill a boat like ours is brought to its destination. The deck-hands emerge from the lower regions like busy ants. Ropes are hurled, and caught by other ants on the wharf and fastened authentically to the stanch piles. The gangways are lowered, and the men, perched on tiny electric machines, slide down them, laden with parcels and luggage. It is all mathematical, accomplished without a slip—just as a circus crew untangles innumer-

able ropes and brings order out of apparent chaos.

We were not to disembark at Wood's Hole—yet. One more stop—Martha's Vineyard—and then on to Nantucket. A burning sunset greeted our eyes as our boat sped on. Some lines of Emily Dickinson's came into my head as I watched it: *

> The largest fire ever known
> Occurs each afternoon,
> Discovered is without surprise,
> Proceeds without concern:
> Consumes, and no report to men,
> An Occidental town,
> Rebuilt another morning
> To be again burned down.

* From *The Poems of Emily Dickinson,* edited by Martha Dickinson Bianchi and Alfred Leete Hampson. Reprinted by permission of Little, Brown & Company.

VI

WE got into Nantucket at about eight o'clock in the evening. I confess to a thrill in at last reaching this island of which I had heard so much. But it was growing dark, and we did not know just where we were going to stop. Almost any place would be good enough, I thought, so long as the beds were satisfactory. On such a jaunt we had determined never to be anxious for *de luxe* accommodations; and please remember that we were trying to travel on a limited supply of

money. So long as our rooms were clean that is all we asked. We were in them only during our sleeping hours. So we hastened along the nearest street, knowing full well that we should find a suitable lodging-place

We did, and at moderate cost. Then I telephoned Mary Mannering Wadsworth, who has a house in the district known as Surfside. "Welcome!" she said over the wire, in that beautiful voice I remember so well on the stage. "Have you had your dinner?" We hadn't. "Then come right over and I'll give you a cold supper," was the instant reply. "You cross the moors. You can't miss my place."

We leaped into our runabout. In a jiffy we were out of the town, faring over lonely wasteland that reminded us of an eerie scene in *The Hound of the Baskervilles.* No lights anywhere; but no fog, thank heaven, and a decent roadway. It was a path after my own heart, curving this way and that, and afterwards I made a little song about it when we traveled it in daylight. It went as follows:

I love all happy roadways,
Wherever they may be,
That run with childlike fervor,
And race to reach the sea.

From sleepy inland villages,
From crowded towns and marts,
They seek the open country
With eager, burning hearts.

With passionate endurance,
And lordly enterprise,
They leave the woods of hemlock,
Where massive mountains rise,
And rush with glowing purpose
To find the moors and dunes,
Where all day long the ocean waves
Break forth in mighty tunes.

These are the ways that I would know
When summer brings her bliss,
And furnace fires are in the streets
Of our metropolis.
For on these roadways there is peace,
And pain is left behind;
Who would not seek their healing balm,
Their cool, green rapture find?

Not to bewildering summits
Would I now take my way;
Give me a wind-blown prospect
On this sun-smitten day.
Give me a shining journey,
With heart and spirit free,
On one of those bright roadways
That run to reach the sea!

There were few stars that night, and no moon at all. We met no other travelers. Alone, like the roadway, we were running to reach the sea. Finally lighted windows appeared, and in one of those casements I could see the form of our hostess, and it was like a scene in a play when we turned in at the gate. How good that cold meat and salad were at this late hour! The surf was crashing outside this lovely interior, and the rest of the world seemed far away, blotted out. What a place to spend long summer days, I thought, and I could hardly wait for morning to see Nantucket town and the rest of the island.

It was not until 1918 that motors were allowed in this enchanting spot. As in Bermuda, they were forbidden, and perhaps rightly so, for such modern conveyances are out of place; and the best way to go about the little town itself is on foot, or better still in an old-fashioned phaëton. A few of these are parked on the main street of the village, and I picked out a driver who was obviously a native son. His bronzed and weather-beaten face appealed to me. He had the distinguished appearance of an ancient cardinal, and all the dignity of such a prelate. Something told me at once that he knew every crack and cranny of the village, and so it proved. In these winding streets he had made his home

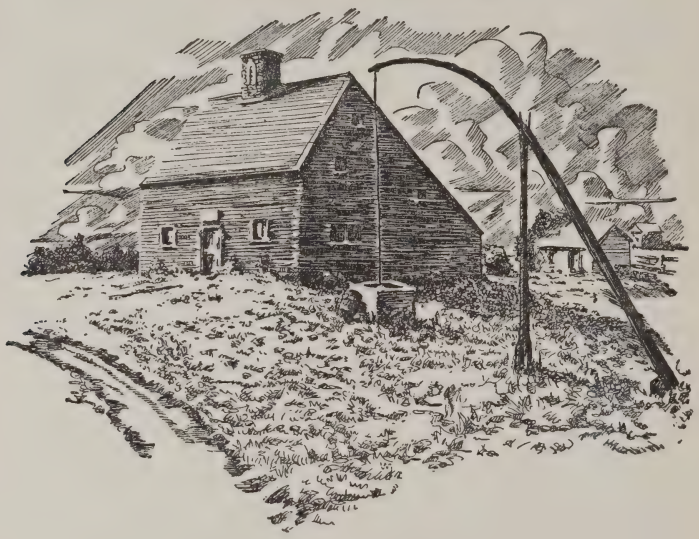
since birth, and I learned that New York, which he had occasionally visited, held no appeal for such a man as he. No, indeed; this was his native habitat, and here he would stay till the final curtain fell about him. And he was a gentleman, if ever there was one. When I discovered that I had no pencil with me, he was as unhappy as I, and drove to his own door to get one, sharpening it for me as he came out of the house. "Here you are," he said simply.

There is something of the old-world charm and fragrance of Charleston in this town on a distant island. The houses are at cross purposes, as it were; some leaning out like old ladies peering down the street, others content to form a backdrop, and simply dream in the sun. There are gay window-boxes on many of them, and gorgeous hydrangeas grace the lawns, or roses of Sharon.

The lilacs were gone, of course, before many a fan doorway. These date as far back as 1724. The Jethro Coffin House, known as Horseshoe House, was built in 1686. It is the oldest dwelling on the island, and is now owned and kept up by the Nantucket Historical Association, which sees to it that such relics are not allowed to crumble and perish.

Industries on this island? There are none; and hence no factories with chimneys pouring forth

smoke. And what a relief this is, after one has passed through so many New England manufacturing towns. Here everything is tidy and restful and sweet—there are no better words for little



The Jethro Coffin House

Nantucket. It is as though life had paused to brush aside all harshness and pandemonium; it is that land of the lotus-eaters where it seemed always afternoon. One forgets the inexorable ticking of clocks, the panic and pain of big cities. The days must run gladly here even when winter comes with its winds and snows hovering over these cobbled

thoroughfares. And on a summer morning, such as I was experiencing, the tenderness of the place creeps into the heart, and troubles are erased in some strange way. A soothing calm envelops the spirit, and the world is well lost.

You will see an old stable turned into a charming residence, with gay chintz curtains waving in the breeze; and you will learn of a long-dead sea-captain's house now used as an Old Ladies' Home. You will hear of another vanished sea-captain, one Joseph Starbuck, who had three sons. With no partiality he built, in the time of his opulence, three wonderful spacious houses, all exactly alike, for each of them, all having the same amount of land. The bricks for these buildings were brought all the way from England. And you may see, as I did, the oldest Civil War veteran on the island, *ætat* 93, sitting before his open door in the warm sunshine, still hale and hearty. He gave me a pleasant "Good morning" as I passed—a grand old gentleman.

Nantucket town was first settled by the Quakers; but they are all gone. There used to be three meeting-houses of the Society of Friends once upon a time; only one remains, and that is used for the Historical Collection. The Ship's Inn, formerly a sea-captain's house—another Starbuck, christened

Charles—stands on the site of the birthplace of Lucretia Coffin Mott, first woman abolitionist and advocate of woman suffrage.

How many Pomander Walks there are!—how many narrow lanes and white picket fences, and old-fashioned gardens you would never catch glimpses of unless you ambled along, slowly and with eyes alert. And there are windmills a-plenty—the oldest having been erected in 1746. The Historical Association keeps it in condition, and daily it grinds the grain which is sold in little paper bags to the summer colonists. Outside the main part of the town are old plain dirt roads, as in the Portuguese section, where children run and romp and play.

The shops are quaint and inviting. One, a florist's, has the prettiest colored sign over its door that I have ever seen. Why do our city stores not follow its imaginative example? Down in the heart of the village, ladies who come from Siasconset—always abbreviated to 'Sconset—to do their daily marketing, congregate under the trees, and idly gossip until it is time to drive their station-wagons, filled with purchases, back to their cottages.

Passing through one little street, I had another bit of good luck. I saw a lady talking to a couple of young motorists who had paused at her door. I

thought I recognized her. Yes, it must be Percy Haswell, the wife of George Fawcett, so beloved on stage and screen. I asked my driver to stop. He knew that I had been right, and the motorists had spun away. I hadn't any idea that my old friends lived in Nantucket, and it was good to see them.

Among Saul's Hills, Nantucket

If I hadn't been on the alert, I should have missed a pleasant morning call. Theatrical people have always loved this peaceful village, and that is not so surprising, for I suppose they feel that they are actually living in a stage set. At many a gate I would not have been astonished if Myrna Loy and Robert Montgomery had come out to play a scene!

But one is brought back to reality as one glances at a certain cottage that looks like any other—until one observes the sinister bars on the windows! It is the town jail—yes, they have a jail, even in placid Nantucket. But no one was in it, I am happy to say. They still tell the story of one prisoner confined there years ago. He sent word to the Superintendent of Prisons that if the sheep weren't kept out of the yard he wouldn't stay there! And once, believe it or not, another captive whom a lawyer wished to see did not find him when he called to talk over his case. "He's down street," said the jailer, calmly, "doin' an errand fer me." Such is the informality of Nantucket. A jail in a farce-comedy, I should say; nothing unpleasant in being confined there.

I noticed several of the summer cottages were closed, tightly boarded up—Austin Strong's house, for instance, on Quince Street. A sign was tacked on the door. It seems that the State Police, when residents are away, watch over such property (there is no charge for the service) and periodical calls are made to see that all is well—just part of the day's work. But there are few robberies on the island—perhaps none at all, judging by the emptiness of the jail.

The tourists will find no end of delightful places

to dine. Down near the wharf, for example, is The Skipper—a schooner, with stewards dressed in sailor suits. A gangway from the pier, and little gaily decorated tables on the upper deck. Some one with a sense of humor must own this boat, for on the menu one finds this explanatory note:

LANDLUBBERS ANSWERED!

"No, she is not an Old Whaler."
"No, she is not afloat."
"No, the kitchen is not 'down-stairs.' "
"How much did you pay for her?"
"According to the Old Salts, twice as much as she was worth."
"No, you don't have to buy tickets to go aboard."
"Yes, The Skipper IS run by a woman."
"Yes, we do mean it when we say 'No tips'!"

A summer theater is in the town; and one is reminded again how actors have always flocked to this island. Long ago I remember how they spent months at 'Sconset; but they went there to play—in the sense of a vacation, not to strut the boards. Robert Hilliard had a fine cottage there near the long beach, and so had Bertha Galland, Henry Woodruff, and other stars of that time. No motors in those days. It must have been a long trip to take in a carriage; but when they arrived there was the

Sankaty golf-links; and maybe the sign was there, as it is now, reading: "3,000 miles to Spain," and another, "100 Feet to the Treasure Chest"—not a Captain Kidd lure, but a Gift Shoppe. But I hope the present hideous black standpipe wasn't visible

An old house with a widow's walk, Nantucket

—a reminder of so-called civilization. It is a blot on the landscape.

The approach to 'Sconset leads through a thick growth of scrub pine, scrub oak, bayberry, and broom—a flat, lonely district of little beauty, as if it were now tired and old. Miles of telegraph poles, like Tyburn Hill gallows. But when the moors come in sight, how lovely beyond words they are—

wide acres of them, stretching on and on and on.

Nantucket Island has an area of only forty-seven square miles, and a coast-line of eighty-eight miles. There are few hills upon it, the highest being but ninety-one feet above the sea-level. The soil is sandy, but in recent years it has been carefully cultivated with no little success. There are a few ponds dotting the surface, and there is, of course, a lighthouse. Far out at sea as it is, it has known many severe storms through the years, resulting in innumerable wrecks along the shore. So life-stations exist now on Muskeget Island and at Surf-side. Sometimes heavy fogs roll in, ghostlike and sinister.

Naturally, there is plenty of good fishing round-about. Cod and scallops are caught in abundance, and sheep-raising was once an important industry. The town of Nantucket was settled as long ago as 1661, and incorporated in 1671.

Some one asked me, when I was praising the island, if I did not think the principal village itself had become, because of the many tourists who visit it annually, a little self-conscious. "To me," said the lady, "it's a good deal like a Southern belle flirting behind a fan. She knows she's pretty, and sought after by many suitors, and she smiles and droops her eyes, and lets her ringlets half hide her

cheeks. She even simpers occasionally, and giggles."

I couldn't agree. I found her an unspoiled darling. But how could any one, I asked in turn, as fascinating as she, be utterly oblivious of her charms? Bobbed hair and abbreviated skirts wouldn't suit such a maiden. I hope she always wears long curls and crinoline and carries an old-world fan in her delicate hands. I hated to say good-by to her as she winked at me from the wharf.

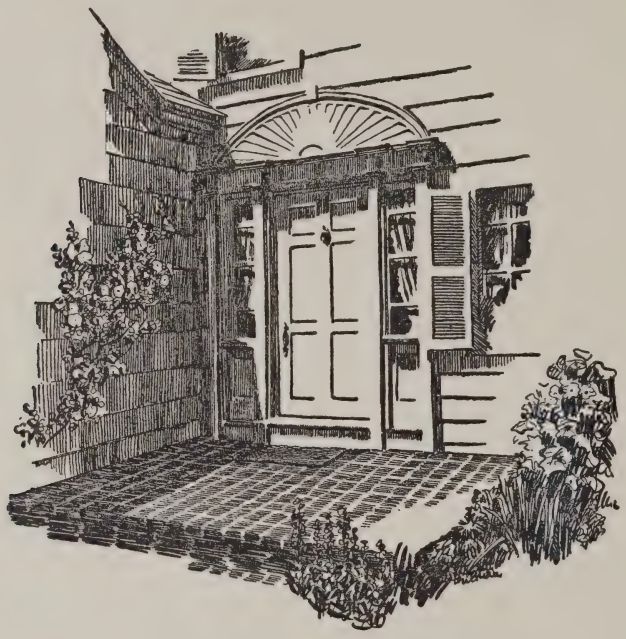
It was raining slightly when we left Nantucket very early one morning. Forbidding dark clouds appeared in the sky, and soon after our boat started the storm broke, the waves came up in great green and white battalions, and our craft plunged until the decks became wet, and we were driven within. But from our vantage point we could watch the rain descend with slashing whips or sharp-pointed bayonets, and we could see the gulls as they distractedly breasted both the waters and the storm. Soon that flirtatious lady, Nantucket, was invisible, and from the prow of our steamer we could not make out the shores of Martha's Vineyard, whither we were headed. No, she, too, was hidden behind the raging elements; but later her fair form rose out of the sea, as the wind and rain abated, and we were able to achieve an easy landing.

The island we came to is not so large as the one

we had just left. We were to discover, however, that it boasts, outside its tiny settlements, a more robust beauty; more hills, more trees, stern cliffs, as well as gentle areas untouched as yet by the inevitable American "developments." I could think of no more perfect place to go if an artist or a writer wished to get a summer's work done in absolute quiet, with no annoying interruptions. There are lonely cottages which could be rented, perhaps, for very little—in secluded regions where train whistles and telephones would not disturb one. There was once a railway on this happy island that ran from Oak Bluffs to Edgartown and beyond. This was in 1874, I was told; but it was never a financial success, and so it has been abandoned since 1909. Who needs a train in so restricted a domain, now that the motor-car is about as swift, and far more practical?

Edgartown, not nearly so large as the village of Nantucket, has an almost equal charm, however. For the summer tourist it is not the magnet it might well be, situated as it is and with many gift shoppes and pretty dwellings. It draws to itself, year after year, the same faithful colonists who never dream of going elsewhere. Most of them own their cottages, and open them in late May or early June.

I wanted to see my friend Emily Post who gave me, over the telephone, precise directions, and then added, "My white house is covered with



Emily Post's doorway, Edgartown

flowers," which sounded enchanting. But when I got there, a char-à-banc had driven up, and to my amazement and amusement almost all the passengers had stepped out and were busy taking snapshots, peering about, walking on the grass, and otherwise making a nuisance of themselves. I won-

dered if they had read Mrs. Post's book on etiquette. If so—which I doubted—they had forgotten its contents; but the gentle author was in no wise concerned with these prying visitors. "They do it all the time," she smilingly said. "They don't do any real harm, so why should I complain, bless them, so long as they don't bother me at my dictation?"

I venture to say that there's no more delightful cottage than this on the whole island. At least I never saw one.

It was curious to drive away along the western shore of the island, devoid of settlements for a long while, after we had seen the clustered prettiness of Edgartown. Nothing here, except an endless stretch of scrub oak, fading goldenrod and depressing blankness. We came to West Tisbury, and scarcely recognized the fact; for why should this less than hamlet be honored with a name? Truly rural, such a country. But beyond Chilmark a lovely moorland district springs up, with the sea before you; as wild as Dartmoor, and even more beautiful. As if a dull person suddenly made a startling gesture, and took on distinction.

Then came Gay Head. Tents on the highest hill—an Indian settlement, to our astonishment and delight. How blue the sea was—as blue as the

It was like a Persian tapestry half fallen from some invisible wall

Mediterranean, with a single sail-boat in the neighboring harbor, like a delicate punctuation mark; and in the near distance, the smallest of islands, called No Man's Land. Once cattle used to gaze there; it is abandoned now. A coast-guard station stood proudly on the eminence before us, strong and powerful in contrast to the fragile painted tents of the Indians. Its watchful eye was ever looking out to sea. Little winding roads, green shrubs, and then—the cliffs, with pink rocks, red, and terra-cotta, and gray; the scrub growths pouring down to meet them. It was like a Persian tapestry half fallen from some invisible wall. A strong, impregnable coast-line, with the surf pounding like a million giants calling, as if in fear. A light mist was drifting in, softening the scene.

I shall think often of that iron region as it lay before me. It is photographed on my brain. In days to be I may sometimes say to myself, "It is there now—waiting for me; harsh, full of masculine power. I wonder if I can ever go back to it." It had magic for me, this unexpected robustness. I still hear the sounds below, like deep organ notes; I still see the impetuous waves struggling to break the rocks along the shore, pressing hard upon them —to no avail.

Some one told us that there were three kinds of

people at Martha's Vineyard. An Islander is one whose family has lived there for generations. He has pride in his forebears. He is definitely a very part of the place. An On-Islander is one who has lived there in his youth, gone away—and come back. But an Off-Islander is one who comes only for the radiant summer season and is therefore, in the eyes of the others, merely to be tolerated. These are fine distinctions. There is no getting beyond the barriers that separate them.

We saw Menemsha Cove, a minute fishing settlement where lobsters and swordfish are caught in abundance, and where the small boats bob on the waters—a bit of Norway transported to this distant shore.

Vineyard Haven is as pretty as Edgartown, and it was here that we found an old friend who insisted that we lunch with her. She was gathering petunias in her garden as we came up the path. "I'm only an Off-Islander," she said, laughing; "but as for you—well, you're not even that—you're just trippers, vagabonds, but no less welcome on that account. Park your runabout, and come right in." Talk about Southern hospitality!—it isn't any warmer than that you find in New England.

We left for Wood's Hole that afternoon, and drove through it to Falmouth, a neat village with

the usual New England green, and houses hidden behind thick foliage, and a busy main street. Here, they boast, one drinks the softest, purest water to be found anywhere.

I liked the place; but I was very weary that night, and determined to go to bed early at our inn. Alas! it happened to be a Thursday evening, and I had lost all track of the days of the week. That was the one night when they had a dance downstairs. My head was no sooner on the pillow when the sound of what was obviously "canned" music floated up to me—the one-step, and then the rhumba and other modern tunes; and my heart sank. But I was so physically exhausted that I didn't even have to will myself to sleep. I fell into a deep slumber, and heard only the opening bars, and the far swish of dancing feet. Then I dreamed, for ten blessed hours, of nothing at all. That is what many days out-of-doors do for one.

There used to be Indians about Falmouth, and I heard a story that delighted me. You see, in this section of the world, people pride themselves on their honesty and integrity; and a few of the half-breed Indians were looked upon with distrust. A full-blooded Seminole got to the place somehow, years ago, and became a great crony of a certain white man. They often went hunting together; but

there had been trouble with other tribes. The white man had occasion to leave one of his guns in his car, and asked his companion if it would be all right to let it remain there. A hurt look came over the Seminole's face; then, with great dignity he drew himself up and said: "Yes; for there are no white men about."

Yet New England honesty prevails. As you reach this section, you begin to see signs in public places: "Found: a watch-chain" or "a pair of gloves." The owner has only to prove such lost articles are his, and they are returned.

At Wood's Hole there is the great Marine Biological Laboratory, commonly referred to as the MBL. It is financed by the Government, by various universities and colleges, and by private donations. Students come from all over the country to take special courses; they love the research work so much that many of them remain in their study rooms far into the night, and can scarcely be torn away. There are not only lectures and examinations but concerts and dances in the recreation periods. I saw the students settling down earnestly one morning to their work, their young faces alert and interested, this coming generation full of that old abiding American energy. Almost all of the faculty are youthful men and women. Some are

but twenty-five; others are thirty or thereabouts. A public aquarium is close by the laboratories—the only one I have ever seen that isn't round or oval in shape; and here the rarest specimens are to be found.

All the students are serious, grave even as they wander down the pleasant streets. Pausing to look in a shop window, I couldn't help overhearing a bit of conversation between two of them—a lad and a girl. I had thought, in this off hour, that they might be whispering sweet nothings to each other in the dripping sunshine; but no. This was what came to my ears, from the girl: ". . . and it does *not* increase the oxygen consumption"!

How beautiful it was on this morning in early September! Wood's Hole touches Nantucket Sound as well as Buzzard's Bay, and on either side of us diamonds glittered on the waters, and only a few fleecy clouds sailed like fragile barks in the blue expanse above us. The air was like golden wine; and when we left we saw lagoons that lay still and peaceful. They peeped out at us from frequent groves—clear mirrors that reflected the sky overhead; jewels that had a cameo-like conciseness. We would soon be at Cape Cod, where we were to discover a country almost as spotlessly clean as the dikes in Holland. Anything ugly is tidied up. At

Osterville, for instance, a plain wire fence was made lovely by simply placing morning-glory vines upon it. What a gay screen it made as we came upon it, trembling in the morning light.

It was hard to think, in this benign region, of the strife in realms beyond our borders. Occasionally, as we looked at newspapers and read of wars and threatened wars we realized that beauty like this had been uprooted in other lands; that such serenity did not always last; that what man himself, and the kindly processes of Nature had given, could be destroyed in a twinkling. I have always, in high moments of rapture, been shaken into a consciousness of the underlying tragedy of life. We get our joys in scattered fragments—little threads of song followed by discord; brief hours of wonder swiftly overtaken by bitter moments of disillusionment. Yet if loveliness does not last, neither does sorrow. There is a balancing power that fortunately causes us to recover from pain; and we should remember, as Keats said, that Time is an aged nurse who rocks us to patience.

The whole so-called civilized world recently had a case of the jitters. Not knowing whether another war could be postponed, or perhaps, heaven help us, made impossible, poor mortals went about alarmed and terrified; and after their nerves had

somehow been quieted, one heard the expression on all sides, "Let us enjoy the moment; for one cannot plan, as one used to do, with any hope of safety and security." And thus one takes each day as it comes along, and broods not too much on the morrow. It is pitiful. It is pathetic. Snatch, therefore, any scrap of beauty, and press it to your heart, for the days to come may be full of ugliness and despair.

We took back roads, traversing over the Cape. There are many large and small ponds roundabout which we wanted to see, and though the main thoroughfares were not always crowded, it would be fun to find the more secluded sections. So we went back and forth, with the sense of leisure that comes over one, traveling through New England. Why stick to any route? we asked ourselves. We were jogging, you must remember, not hurrying:

The little back roads are the best of all,
When summer is turning to chilly fall;
For here are stillness and honeyed quiet,
Away from the main road's pulse and riot.
Here are the long-forgotten flowers,
Here are dreams through the soft, slow hours.

Gay taverns bloom on the highroads far,
But here is the tranquil evening star;

And here is the dim light of the moon,
Reflected in some blue lagoon,
And when night comes with its sleep and rest,
A back road inn is the quietest.

The Cape stretches out into the sea, and becomes a slender line as it curls, at its northern extremity, almost as if it wished to proceed farther and reach the main coast of Massachusetts. The result of this curving gesture is the forming of Cape Cod Bay.

We had seen Cotuit, originally an Indian village called "Coatuet," meaning Long Fields. It was bought from the Indians in 1648 by Miles Standish —for a brass kettle and a hoe! This little settlement is the home of the delicious and justly famous Cotuit oyster.

Now, some localities, as you glance at the map, seem devoid of special interest; but as you approach, you see that you were wrong. Chatham, for example. Suddenly here a thin island of sand and dune grass leapt out of the sea. It was like a silvery bar resting on the water, clean-cut as if a Damascus blade had severed it from the shore. We paused for a long time to stare at this unexpected jewel shining in the sun, as perfect and smooth as a pearl.

I went into a shop in the village to get some

post-cards. There were none of this particular scene; but accidentally I found one of the house of my friend, Joseph C. Lincoln. His Cape Cod stories are celebrated. I hadn't seen the author for years, and so we sought out his quaint cottage, on the edge of the village. Every one knew where he lived, of course. Alas! he was out fishing for the day.

Beyond Chatham and Orleans, Eastham stretches out in a long leisurely street that never seems to know when to end: a beautifully situated old town not quite touching the water. Similarly placed is Truro. It is but a short walk to the beaches on either side, and a choice may be made between the bay and the ocean. Gradually we were coming to that unbelievably thin strip of land on which Provincetown stands.

This is a Mecca for artists and writers. Little white bungalows dot the shore in mathematical rows, and I wondered how they could stand up, in winter, against the winds that must prevail. The principal street was swarming with summer colonists, and presently we heard a bell, and a town crier, in picturesque costume, stood still for a moment and shouted news from the outside world, which indeed seemed far away. He was an anachronism in this age of the radio, something stepping

The town crier of Provincetown

from the pages of an ancient folio; but the people listened, as though they could not turn a gadget and get the information he gave in another miraculous way. So the town preserves the past. The tiny railway that once connected it with the mainland has been abandoned, and Provincetown seems content without its coming and going. There are few such archaic communities left. The inhabitants walked slowly about, as if in a dream; or they stood still and paid no attention to our car as we carefully maneuvered to keep out of their way in this narrow area. It is not a beautiful village, and

it is crowned with a tall observation tower that in no wise adds to its charm.

The west and north shore of the Cape is quite different in character from the south and east shore. It is difficult to explain just why this should be. We saw more flowers, a richer expanse of fields and meadows in which cattle grazed, more clusters of goldenrod, and maybe a few more picket fences. In Dennis a summer theater was giving its last play of the season, which caused us to realize that the earlier autumn up here was on its way. After the sun went down there was a chilliness in the air, not uncomfortable; but gardens were not the places to stop for tea. We felt the need of a roof. "The Merchant of Dennis" might call us to pause at his gift shoppe; I admit that his sign attracted me; but it was getting dark when we saw it, and so we moved along to Barnstable.

I was glad, later, that we had; for on one of those back roads so much to our liking, we came to a small white cottage set on a slope. It actually nodded to us. It proved to be one of the nicest old shingled houses at which we stayed, owned by a French lady who had married an American. She was a widow now, and there was a pretty daughter who was always doing something to help her mother—I never saw two happier people than

they; and a young son who vaguely went in and out.

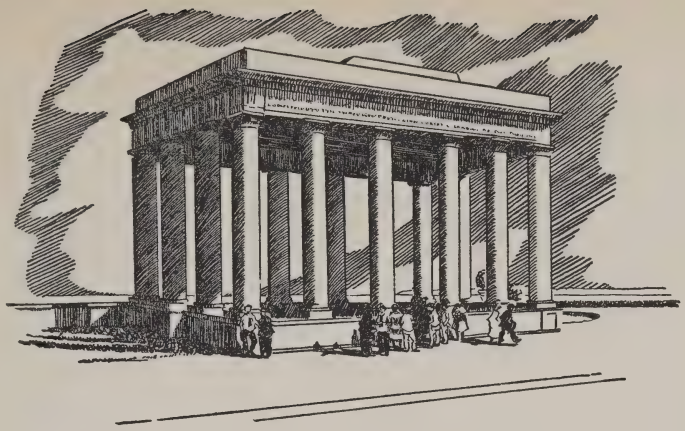
The sloping lawn attracted us, and the meadows beyond with a cluster of trees and shrubs, as brown as those in a Corot painting. We were the only guests, and I doubted if they had had many lately, so enthusiastic were their preparations for our brief stay. Next morning, charmed by the stillness all around us, we decided to loaf and invite our souls. And so under the elms and maples, we let the day drift by. I remember that Dick and I didn't even talk. In the late afternoon I wanted a stroll along those quiet back roads, for after you have sat in a car as long as we had, you need to stretch your legs. There was marshland all about, and I thought how happy I could be in such a spot as this, watching the evening sun go down, seeing a heron standing like a statue on a lonely rock, hearing no noise, and forgetting the tumult of cities. But such a mood does not last, I find. When daylight dwindles, one craves an inn filled with people; and we found one about to close for the season. It was lighted with candles, and an open fire felt good as we came in out of the brisk, keen air.

There is always something sad and wistful about such a place ready to close its doors. Trunks and bags are in the hall. The servants move about on

noiseless feet, not as busy as they were when the season was at its height. Where do they go when the inn shuts down? They live, I suppose, in the hope of employment again next year. Those empty tables—they recall how filled with laughing and chattering guests they were, and they are grateful for stray tourists like ourselves on these final days. Soon they will be putting away the dishes and silver, covering the pictures and curtains, and watching the last guests get into their cars to speed off. Well, it's been the same in years gone by—the identical pattern of their working days filled with routine. They must hope for the return of the same patrons they have served, a renewal of the companionship that has meant so much to them. They will settle down somewhere for the long winter months—get South, if they can, for similar occupation, like gipsies moving back and forth. Like nurses, leaving one charge to go to another, beginning all over again.

It would seem that every one in America has a motor—except me. One sees, pausing as we did, neighbors of our little French overnight hostess, starting away on trips; leaving their snug, clean, little cottages and gardens, for that recreation so necessary to us all. Friendly people in the streets will tell you how they love the unhurried life in

these villages; they have no desire to leave their homes too far behind them; but an occasional jaunt—yes. Few, if any, have distracting radios in their cars. They are off for a glimpse of pleasant scenes, and need no reminder of the noisy world outside. We, too, had to leave. Our next stop was to be Plymouth.



VII

IT is inevitable, as you approach the coast where the Pilgrim Fathers landed in 1620, that the lines of Felicia Hemans' old ballad should come to mind:

The breaking waves dashed high
On a stern and rock-bound coast,
And the woods, against a stormy sky,
Their giant branches tossed;

And the heavy night hung dark
The hills and waters o'er,
When a band of exiles moored their bark
On a wild New England shore.

The coast is not wild now. Perhaps the waves dash high at times; but they can hardly reach the rock itself, safe beneath its sheltering roof. I have heard that vandals have tried, from time to time, to discolor it and even chip it. I don't know how true that is. It looked well taken care of on the morning I saw it. We have few shrines in our new country; and there are not many societies that make it their business to preserve those we have. The Colonial Dames of America have caused a rather impressive stone canopy to be erected over Plymouth Rock. It cost about $75,000. Tourists from all parts of the land come and park their cars near it, and then look down, some with awe, others with only a mild curiosity. They form groups at the railing, listening while two bright youths, in turn, deliver a stereotyped talk, giving the history of the rock. The speech lasts three minutes. Then there is silence for the same length of time, when it is repeated in a monotonous sing-song. But the youths cannot be blamed for any lack of patriotic fervor. How dreary it must be to say the same thing over and over, with any degree of enthusiasm. A broad hint is given that any contributions will be received with gratitude. Hands go into pockets, the listeners stare again, as if they

deserved a dividend, and move on to make way for a fresh audience.

Forty-seven Pilgrims were buried near this spot, and then, much later, their bones were removed to a stone sarcophagus to the rear of the hill across the road. In 1920 it was removed to where it now is, at Cole's Hill. Cyrus Dalin, an Indian sculptor, still living, I believe, designed this sarcophagus. He is, or was, a Chief of the Wampanougue tribe, a branch of the Narragansett tribe. An English linden tree was brought over by Colonel George Watson in 1830 and planted near the shrine.

I admit that I found it difficult to feel as reverent as I knew I ought to be when I stood under the handsome canopy; for the public road, with its incessant hum of traffic was right behind me; and on the rise of land on the other side, several enterprising merchants, through gaudy signs, informed the world at large of the products they had for sale. I didn't want any lobster, steaks, or clams in those few moments when I desired to reflect on the beginnings of our history, on the courage of those men and women who had sought the shores of this continent to gain freedom and to escape religious persecution. Loud motor-horns and vendors of peanuts and popcorn were not conducive to a

pious frame of mind. It was impossible to lose one's self in meditation, though I did my best to put myself in the proper mood. In vain. So at last I turned away, a little sadly, and went to the Historical Museum in the town of Plymouth, where I knew that I could wander about with nothing to disturb my musings.

At Duxbury, Miles Standish, American colonist, is buried. He lived there, on Captain's Hill, for twenty-five years, and near the house where he dwelt a stone shaft, very high and imposing, raises its head. His career appealed to some of our New England authors; but great liberties were taken both by Longfellow and Lowell. In any event, Standish rests in peace now, and may smile, as he sleeps, at the poetic record of his "courtship" and the prose "interview" which Lowell wrote.

I suppose I have visited Boston fifty times, yet never have I seen the historic wharf where a certain celebrated tea-party took place. But many Bostonians, I discovered, have been equally remiss, with not so good an excuse as mine. On this occassion, however, I determined to seek it out. If we Americans have few shrines, as I have said, that may be because so few citizens take a vivid, or even a casual, interest in them.

We looked at our map, and the famous spot was

plainly indicated. How simple it would be to locate it, we thought joyfully. Yet when we reached the place, nothing at all was there—no tall shaft, as for Miles Standish, no canopy as for an inanimate rock. We could not have gone wrong, Dick said, again studying the criss-cross streets of Boston while I looked over his shoulder. Surely we hadn't made a mistake. A gas-station helper could fill our tanks, but he could give no information. He "allowed he'd never thought where it was," rather shamefacedly, as he bent over our car; but he *had* seen Grant's Tomb once when he'd been to New York—as if that fact made him a patriot.

"But you must have heard where the tea-party was held?" I insisted. "Surely . . ."

"No, sir; sorry," he answered, this time with no embarrassment; "maybe Jim, over there, can tell you." But Jim was equally ignorant.

We gazed around us at the ugly stretch of boards and small craft being loaded with bales. I had expected a lordly monument; and I saw only muddy water and a group of deck-hands attending to their work, with a row of half-deserted loft-buildings forming a sorry background. But I wasn't going to give up. There must be *something* here to hallow so momentous an event in American history.

An elevated road thundered, with trolley-cars

beneath it, a half block away; and as we left our car and wandered about on foot, two anxious and puzzled pilgrims, Dick's sharp eyes suddenly discovered a tablet (I never should have found it had I been alone). In the half-dusk caused by the elevated, on the corner of Pearl and Atlantic streets, it was attached to the façade of a gloomy building. Now, undoubtedly the Harbor once came up as far as this spot where the tablet hangs; but it is hardly visible to the passer-by. Indeed, as I stood eagerly copying the inscription, one or two people paused, astonished, I imagine, that there was anything of interest in this hideous neighborhood. Then, following my glance, they evinced no further concern, and went away, probably thinking me a most eccentric fellow. This is what I copied:

HERE FORMERLY STOOD
GRIFFIN WHARF,
AT WHICH LAY MOORED ON DEC. 16, 1773,
THREE BRITISH SHIPS WITH CARGOES OF TEA.
TO DEFEAT KING GEORGE'S TRIVIAL BUT TYRANNICAL TAX OF THREE PENCE A POUND, ABOUT NINETY CITIZENS OF BOSTON, PARTLY DISGUISED AS INDIANS, BOARDED THE SHIPS, THREW THE CARGOES, THREE HUNDRED AND FORTY-TWO CHESTS IN ALL, INTO THE SEA, AND MADE THE WORLD RING WITH THE PATRIOTIC EXPLOIT OF THE

BOSTON TEA PARTY

"No! ne'er was mingled such a draught
In palace, hall, or arbor,
As freeman brewed and tyrants quaffed
That night in Boston Harbor."

I do not think Boston should be proud of this shoddy, hidden-away memorial. Surely so dramatic an event is worthy of a sculptor's genius. Isn't this something for the Colonial Dames to attend to? They have been brightly busy elsewhere. I all but wept for the lack of patriotic enterprise which has dumped the Boston tea-party under a roaring elevated road, and left it there, neglected and forlorn.

After this little slap at Boston, one should atone by paying it a few compliments—easy enough to do, as I truly love the city. It is one of the most interesting on our continent, with its wide and aristocratic Commonwealth Avenue, its Beacon Hill, and its narrow winding streets which were once only cow-paths. Through these latter a taxi-cab is scarcely able to trace its way, as in those tight little lanes of London. Arnold Bennett said of it, on his first visit here, that it was at once the most American and the most British of our cities; and he was right. It is energetic, with all our na-

tive force; but it is conventional and unchangeable, too. Called "the Hub," very often, for many decades it was the literary center of the United States until New York built up far more publishing houses and robbed it of its first place in that regard. It was only natural that the New England group of distinguished authors should make Boston and its environs their home; that one of our early magazines, the *Atlantic Monthly,* should be issued there, and one of our leading universities be founded near-by; that a great library should rise within its precincts—one of the finest in the style of the Italian Renaissance, reminding one of a Florentine palace. It is rich in historical associations, of course—with its Old South Church, Christ Church, in the tower of which the signal lights were placed for Paul Revere on his famous ride in 1775; and Faneuil Hall, built in 1762, and reconstructed as brief a time ago as 1898. It has been called "the cradle of American liberty." It is now the headquarters of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company of Boston, started in 1638; and so it is the oldest military organization in the country.

Boston has never taken to skyscrapers. They would be out of tune there; they would destroy the old feeling of the city. And so Boston goes on

its own placid way, content with civic improvements like its splendid Esplanade on the Charles River and its fine tunnels for electric trams.

No American city is surrounded with so many delightful suburbs. They reach out in all directions, and are most accessible—Cambridge, Roxbury, Concord, Dorchester, Chelsea, Jamaica Plain, Brookline, and a multitude of others.

Boston—particularly the old Boston—has been understood and satirized by many novelists. William Dean Howells knew it well in the 'eighties, when formal dinners began at the unseemly hour of six-thirty in the evening, and party calls afterwards were compulsory. He deplored, in his *Silas Lapham,* even then, the closed mansions in summer that faced the Common, while the poor had no roofs to cover their heads. Equally understanding was George Santayana in *The Last Puritan;* and with a keen pen John Marquand probed deep beneath the surface of an aristocratic Bostonian's life, in his *Late George Apley.*

But Bostonians, like the English, go calmly on; and if they read the witty and sometimes harsh things said of them, they give no evidence of resentment. What if one has seen a thoroughbred in his proud dwelling on Commonwealth Avenue—a gentleman of means, if not affluence—carefully

place his *Evening Transcript* on one knee and cross the other leg over it—to save wear and tear on his trousers? I doubt if such a little trick is played in any other part of these United States; but at least the Bostonian practises it openly; he is not ashamed of revealing a thrifty habit of years. You must admire him for his lack of self-consciousness, his enormous candor even in such small matters.

Salem, too, has its history, its tragic reminders of days not so far gone when witches were burned (incredible to us!). Hundreds of the ancient doorways and houses have been preserved, and there is no lovelier sight than the rows of red brick residences on Chestnut Street, as perfect, architecturally, as anything in our land. One must not neglect the stately court-houses, one of them of granite with enormous monolithic Corinthian pillars.

Salem was settled in 1626 by one Roger Conant, and it soon became a thriving fishing village. The first Congregational Church in America was erected here in 1629, and Roger Williams became its pastor, or "teacher," as he was sometimes called. When the witchcraft excitement came in 1692, Salem was in a ferment, and its name will always be connected with that ghastly period; but many

of us forget—if we ever knew—that there had been similar trials and executions of women supposed to be witches: in 1648 at Charlestown; at Boston in 1655; and at Newbury in 1680.

It was at Beverly Farms that the late President Taft used to spend his summers. The whole district in this part of Massachusetts is crowded with huge elms and oaks and other trees, and the many estates—some surrounded by walls—are scarcely to be seen as one passes along. But though private residences predominate, every now and then one is reminded of the manufacturing industries that give employment to so many Americans and foreigners. At Beverly itself we came upon the largest shoe-machinery factory I have ever gazed upon. It must have been more than four city blocks in length, though it was but four stories tall. Curiously enough, it was almost next to the old Balch house, now unoccupied. This was built in 1638 by John Balch, who came over in 1623 with Captain Robert Gorges. The "old planters" received this land in exchange for their settlement at Salem. A faded brown, weather-beaten wooden structure with diamond-pane windows, it now stands facing a main highway, turning its back on the factory, indignant, perhaps, that its once hushed province has been invaded by motors and machinery.

But for the most part, the country around Hamilton and Ipswich has retained its beauty. It is tender, rolling land, with plenty of woods and little hills, as soft as Surrey or Kent. At the well-known Myopia Club, the horsey set foregather, and dinners and dances are frequently given. The families here do not change; they hold on to their principles, as a lady said to me, and keep their cherished beliefs. It is almost an ivory-tower existence. Yet there is no haughtiness; only a sort of supreme indifference, a desire to remain aloof, to move on an ordered and established way. How long this attitude can last in a rapidly changing social order no one can guess. Some big and pretentious estates have been closed, or divided into smaller areas, as in England; others are kept up on a less lavish scale, which is just as well. There isn't any fanfare; there is no nouveau-riche display. Underneath the surface there may be a silent acceptance of the fact that old-established customs are going out, and that the next generation will be forced to live a simpler and more restricted life. The snobbery and pomp of a place like Newport are not apparent here; that, at least is certain, and makes such a community less open to criticism.

We got to Concord on a Sunday, and felt that calm which descends on every New England vil-

The Minute Man at Concord

lage on the Sabbath day. Church bells were ringing, and in the late afternoon many people were sitting quietly on their lawns under spacious trees. Not far away was the great granite obelisk which marks the spot where the first British soldiers were slain; and near that the bronze "Minute Man" memorial designed by Daniel Chester French, the sculptor, who was a native of the town. It seemed strange to recall the liveliness and bloodshed of the past as we took our slow way through these still streets.

Concord, though it is within easy commuting

distance of Boston—many business men go in and out every day—has none of the aspect or characteristics of a suburb. It is sufficient unto itself; an entity; an almost hallowed spot, with its unique and exciting history. I could find no apartment-houses within its dim and lordly borders; yet there may be such suburban acquisitions as kitchenette cubbyholes, two-family houses, and walk-up flats with electric refrigerators. I don't know. I only do know that they would seem anachronisms in this royal little town—I can think of it as nothing else.

In the heart of the town is Jethro's Tree. "Near this spot," the legend runs, "stood the ancient oak beneath which Major Simon Willard and his associates bought from the Indians the '6 miles of land square' ordered by the general court for the plantation of Concord, Spt. 18, 1635."

Here, as in Plymouth, one is reminded of another poem celebrating a great event—Emerson's hymn, sung at the completion of the Battle Monument in April, 1836:

> By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
> Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
> Here once the embattled farmers stood,
> And fired the shot heard round the world.

The Old North Bridge, Concord

The bridge is still there, if the shot can no longer be heard. Only, it has been renovated and completely remodeled so that it is not "rude" today. It is an astonishingly compact structure, linked as it is in our minds with so portentous and mighty an event. The statue close by is also smaller than you would expect it to be. The bronze figure of the Minute Man is august and stern, and beneath it is the stanza from Emerson's poem I have quoted above.

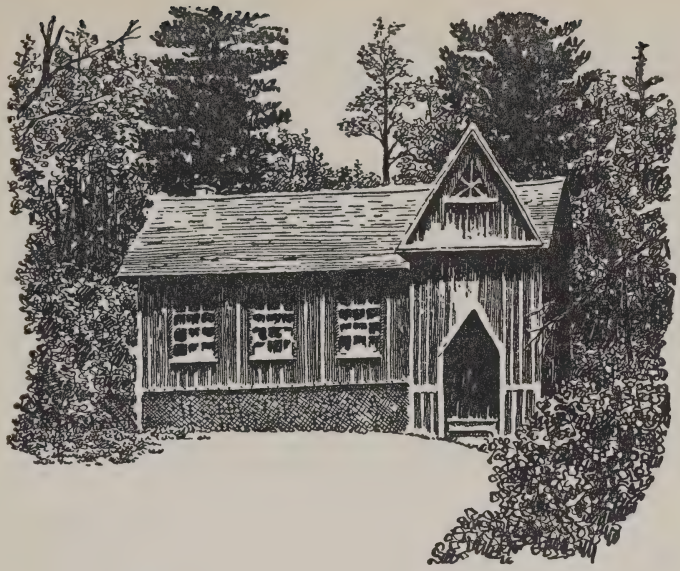
I have always rejoiced that we Americans were

magnanimous enough to see to it that the grave containing all that remains of the British soldiers who fought so bravely for a cause which they felt to be as just and right as ours, should be preserved and kept up, with wreaths upon it. A rough rock of goodly size marks their resting place, and on it is engraved this tribute—a quatrain as gallant as it is touching:

> They came three thousand miles and died
> To keep the past upon its throne;
> Unheard beyond the ocean tide
> Their English mother made her moan.
> April 19, 1775

You must not fail to see the Concord School of Philosophy, in the woods near-by, with its churchlike entrance and its Georgian paned windows; and you should not miss Thoreau's Cairn—a pile of strong rocks in a glade of delicate trees.

Ah! what great men and women have lived and dreamed in Concord—Emerson, Hawthorne, Thoreau, Louisa M. Alcott, and her father, A. Bronson Alcott. Their spirits will forever haunt this most serene and tranquil of villages; for some of them sleep in the beautiful Sleepy Hollow Cemetery. Emerson's cottage stands on the Turnpike—a plain white square frame building, with green shutters—exactly the kind of dwelling one



The Concord School of Philosophy

would have expected the Sage of Concord to have chosen. Miss Alcott's house is just as plain and sweet, filled with mementoes of the best loved of all our writers of juvenile stories.

On Lexington Road stands the Grapevine House, with this inscription before it:

> EPHRAIM WALES BULL PLANTED SEEDS OF A WILD LABRUSCA GRAPE FOUND GROWING ON THIS HILLSIDE WHICH AFTER THREE GENERATIONS THROUGH HIS WORK AND WISDOM BECAME IN THIS GARDEN IN SEPTEMBER, 1849, THE CONCORD GRAPE.

VIII

THE moors of Gloucester that I had remembered from my youth—ah! they have gone, and where they once spread out like a gorgeous rug, with changing colors as the light shifted, are now rows of cottages. But the harbor seemed as full of life as ever, with fishing-smacks ready to go out, and tall masts nodding, small craft rocking, and the glittering water clean and endless before us.

Marblehead, which we first passed through, had

not altered so much. It looks out to sea with eyes that appear to be constantly astonished at the prospect, like nothing so much as a beautiful old lady who has kept her youthful vision. The drive along this shore is not to be missed. We were so pleased with it that we retraced our route from Halibut Point and Pigeon Cove; for later we were going inland, and we liked nothing better than to drink in great draughts of this salt air. New Yorkers may boast of their Long Island—I shan't take back any of my love for it—but this Massachusetts shore is equally appealing, and it is no wonder that Bostonians seek its roads on such a perfect blue-and-gold day. We loitered along, and finally went back to lunch with friends near Beverly. The shining late-afternoon found us headed toward Lowell on the wide Merrimac River.

In such manufacturing towns as Lowell and Lawrence the populace goes out walking when factories close, the movie signs begin to lure them like flashing magnets. The workers have put on their white collars, and every Jack has his Jill as they saunter down the streets. Often there is a sharp dividing line between the busy heart of the city and the residential section. You strike the latter with no preparation for its sudden prettiness. It is there, as if by magic: a quick transition from

dinginess to green loveliness. Shops and factories have been erased in a twinkling; the hum has ceased, and in its place a hush descends with startling force. The open country lies ahead and the last straggling houses give up the wish to stretch farther along the road where perhaps the macadam ends.

Haverhill was the birthplace of the poet Whittier. He must have loved its quiet old streets, the real dirt roads where barefoot boys wandered in the full tide of summer. He must have loved it, too, when the village was snow-bound and one couldn't get to the Quaker meeting-house on a Sabbath morning through the deep drifts. It is still a dreamy place, frosty with age, listening now to motor-horns instead of the tlot-tlot of horses' feet, as in the poet's boyhood days.

It was getting dark as we headed toward Newburyport. After we had crossed a certain bridge, even Dick was not sure, for a moment, of the direction to Kent's Island. We had intended to surprise our friend John Marquand, who has purchased a place there of about five hundred acres. So we stopped at a farmer's cottage to inquire the way. Yes, he knew the road we should take. We could use his telephone, of course (no charge —no, siree!)—only too glad to help us out. Night

had definitely fallen, and if we should be asked to dinner we should have to hurry.

We were, and we did. But how long and lonely that path—it was hardly more than that—seemed across a desolate moorland. We thought of *Wuthering Heights.* We thought of possible brigands hiding in those clumps of bushes; we thought, hilariously, of pirates and even of witches and headless horsemen. There was a sinister silence engulfing us, but we thought what a splendid place this was for an author to have chosen, away from the whole world, especially when he wanted to create and re-create a fellow like *Mr. Moto.*

On and on we drove, and there were still no friendly lighted windows to tell us we were approaching our friend's habitation. Then, swiftly, like a happy star, a light was in front of us; and as we blew our horn, our host came out of his storybook dwelling and ushered us into a cozy room that seemed doubly delightful after our dismal trek. And how good that dinner tasted when we sat down to it long after nine o'clock—generously postponed, though there were other guests—because of our necessarily tardy arrival.

But we learned that it wasn't so lonesome on Kent's Island, after all; for a railway runs across it—not often enough to disturb a writer's muse;

just now and then, to give him a reminder of the world outside. The Marquands can take long walks on their cloistered island, and we longed to see it in daylight. We couldn't stop that evening, however; so maps were brought forth to make clear to us the topography of the property. It's a glorious spot to have discovered, and I could think of crisp autumn nights here, with the wind whistling, and the leaves falling in gusty showers. How the imagination could have full play in such surroundings; what eerie thoughts could teem in one's brain! And what of a wintry season, with sparkling snow-banks outside, and a sparkling fire within! An *Ethan Frome* setting. The kind of solitude one dreams about—and seldom achieves.

We reached, very late that night, an inn on the main thoroughfare of Newburyport; for there had been good stories and witty talk on Kent's Island, and it was hard to leave such a delightful host and hostess and their other friends. Our rooms were generously proportioned, and each and all of them on our floor, we noticed, were named after some celebrity in American history. The beds and towels and chairs were huge—but our bill was small next morning. We saw a fine old-fashioned town, with sweeping lawns and trees and hedgerows, cheery shops and tidy streets. The mild September

weather had brought everybody outdoors, it would seem.

As we drove by the farmer's house where we had inquired our way, we called out and waved to him and his good wife. I don't know whether they recognized us; but we had dutifully thanked them a second time for their solicitude on our account. They deserved far more than that; but you can't insult a New England farmer by offering him a gift of money—indeed you can't; for he is the finest type of aristocrat we have left.

Somehow, a little shaky in geography, one is likely to forget that New Hampshire touches the sea. One thinks of it as an inland State; but crossing into it we were still following the coast-line. It was not long before we came to Hampton Beach, with bungalows and hotels, boarding-houses, crowds swarming from bath-houses, carousels, bands, and peanut vendors—a veritable Coney Island, with all the clatter and excitement of that famous resort. It is a truly fine beach; and we realized the human need of such vacation spots. Beyond Rye there is another beach as perfect in its graceful curving line as any I have ever seen. Three or four islands are in the near distance, rising out of the ocean, luring the ambitious swimmer to try to achieve them.

We had been told not to neglect the Warner mansion in Portsmouth, on the Piscataqua River, celebrated for its architectural beauty. It lived up to our high expectations. Men do not build that way nowadays. Here is an ancient red-brick house, rough and faded through the years, but in a remarkable state of preservation, and its high-ceilinged interior will delight and fascinate the beholder. Yet it is only one of many beautiful residences in this city.

Portsmouth is rich in memories of the Spanish-American War. On Seavey's Island, Admiral Cervera and many of his officers and sailors were captured and held prisoners from July to September, 1898. Later, a great naval prison was built; and it was in 1905 that the eyes of the world turned toward this city, when the treaty that ended the war between Russia and Japan was negotiated and signed in the Peace Building. One cannot do better than to prowl about the streets of Portsmouth for several hours, for it is an enchanting town.

Soon we were to cross the border into another State—Maine; and Kennebunkport was to be our first stop. It has long been a favorite summer place for those who have come to appreciate and love its rocky shore, its graceful bathing-beach, its tucked-away security. On a glowing September

morning it is at its best. Everything was softly glittering, there was an unhurried air in the main street at that moment of high noon when we reached it and went into a shop to get some postcards.

"We sell more of these than any others," the merchant told us. And, of course, he was indicating those showing the residence of Kennebunkport's leading citizen, Booth Tarkington.

I think we gained favor when we proudly said we were going to see Mr. Tarkington. "Really? You're lucky," answered our merchant, with delightful frankness.

"Come right up to lunch," Mrs. Tarkington had said when I ventured to telephone her that we were in town. "And do spend the night," she added with the hospitality so characteristic of her.

Now, when you've slept for many nights in cabins and "tourists accommodated"—no matter how clean and good they have been—you have no idea how welcome is the suggestion that you sleep beneath a friend's roof. Dick and I congratulated ourselves on our good fortune.

It had been many years since I had been up this way; but the Tarkingtons are the kind of friends you go on with where you left off, no matter how long ago that may have been. They took us warmly

The entrance to Booth Tarkington's house at Kennebunkport

in. In other days their lovely house had been visible from the road that leads to it; now it is completely concealed behind a plethora of foliage. The garden was far more opulent than when I had last seen it, and a wonderful new room had been added to the already big house. And the paintings on the walls! No feeling of an art gallery. They were part and parcel of the rooms, and their pur-

chase had given America's greatest author the material for many stories he has written.

After lunch he took us out in his 45-foot motorboat. There had been many whales, he told us, coming into the harbor during the summer, and we might see one or two. We sped through the waters with our host often at the wheel; but we weren't, to our everlasting regret, to see any enormous glossy backs coming to the surface. Late in the afternoon we were to have coffee in Mr. Tarkington's own private little club-house—an old building he has taken on an inlet and fitted up for just such occasions. How wise was the talk we listened to, of art and literature and life and politics. And that night our host and hostess gave us a royal dinner, in candle-light, in an old barn in the village that has been turned into a curio-shop, and run by two charming ladies. Then back home for more talk and laughter; and a deep sleep for us between those luxurious sheets in massive beds.

Next morning, as we crept away early without disturbing our kind host and hostess, I vow we were the two happiest and most refreshed tourists in all New England.

IX

I DO not know why, on a New England roadside, an imitation Danish village should suddenly rear its pretty head; yet that is what happened shortly after we had left Kennebunkport behind us. Were we dreaming, as the quaint houses became visible to our astonished eyes? No; it was true. We were not "seeing things." The sharp turrets were there. A phantom stork was lifted above a colored chimney, and a whole "set," in

brilliant shades, as in a Hollywood movie, was actually before us. Then a sign, informing us that this was a place where tourists like ourselves might pause. It had its attraction—no doubt as to that; it was completely foreign; picturesque; perhaps grotesque, some might say. But it was too early for us to stop when we came upon it, unprepared for its being miraculously there. We merely gazed, smiled, wondered; and then slowly pushed on. "Funny," we said. "Sort of cozy and queer. Wonder who put it up, and why?" I found myself looking back at those clustered rooftops. I couldn't get over my surprise. Some one with a nice little sense of humor must have been responsible for this painstaking effort to bring bright Denmark to rural Maine. I shall always be sorry we didn't investigate it more closely. Such enterprise deserves encouragement.

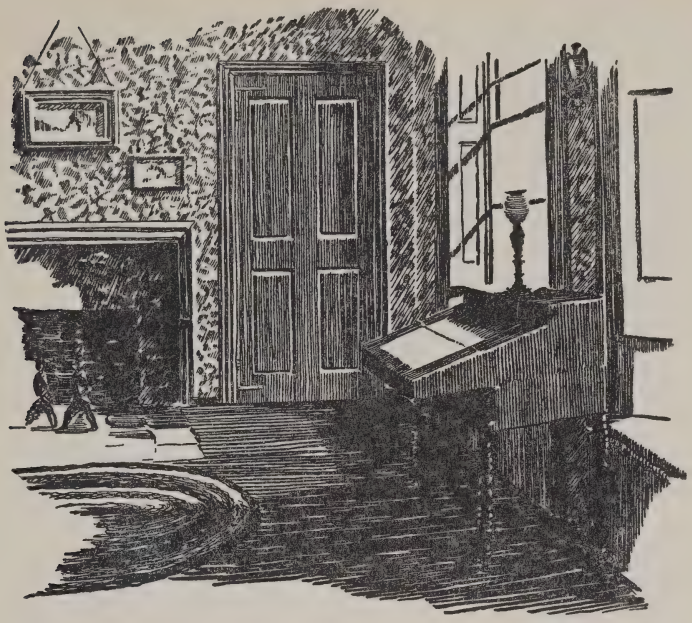
In sharp contrast, we were soon to see, in Portland, a typical New England city, and find, as we were ushered into it, a statue in the public square of one of the sweetest and tenderest of American poets—Longfellow. There he sat, in a great chair, smiling at us passing motorists, serenely oblivious of the bustle around him.

We sought the house he had lived in—as splendid an old mansion as you will find on such a jaunt

as ours. The Maine Historical Society has preserved it, and there is now a library in the rear. Like the Poe cottage in New York, the house is set amid modern buildings that almost appear to crush it out; but jewels like this cannot be broken and shattered. They endure in spite of the encroachments of trade. They shine and sparkle still, and the dust that falls upon them cannot tarnish their radiance. The world goes by; times change; but the glint of the past remains. It is good to find, in the rush and roar of this hour, so friendly a door, so dedicated a spot.

It is something to stand alone in the tiny chamber where Longfellow wrote "The Rainy Day." The garden behind the windows is there, almost as he looked out on it, and the traffic of the town cannot be heard as one pauses in this back room. The mellow sunlight falls on the leaves, and one can all but hear the ticking of the old clock on the stairs, and think how the rain pattered down as the poet listened on that morning so many years behind us.

This had been the home not only of the poet but of his parents and grandparents. All the ancient furniture has been retained, and the visitor will be thrilled at seeing the mantelpieces, the pictures in their oval and square frames, the kitchen



The den in Longfellow's old home at Portland

with its marvelous utensils, the very desk at which "The Rainy Day" was written. There is a small trundle bed in the chamber known as "The Boys' Room," with a little school desk beside it, and cupboards and crannies that speak of a gentler way of living. Even Dick, who said he was "allergic to Longfellow's poetry," seemed to be impressed by his glimpses of all the memorials here preserved. "It *is* sort of wonderful," he said, as we came out

again into the teeming street. You do feel the presence of the kindly white-haired bard as you stand in those rooms; the fragrance of his spirit permeates them still.

On the road to Freeport, we began to smile, and then to be amazed at some signs that appeared every few moments. The first one, in huge letters, read:

THE DESERT OF MAINE!—
A BAFFLING EVOLUTION OF NATURE!

"What can this mean?" we asked each other. Another few hundred yards, and then:

STRANGE BUT TRUE—
DEFIES ALL REASON!

Then,

SEE AN AMAZING SEA OF SAND!

Farther along:

SEE THE DESERT'S MATCHLESS
PANORAMA!

See the Vari-Colored Sands—
Over 100 Different Shades!
Once Seen—Never Forgotten!

And finally:

SEE THE BURIED APPLE TREE,
STILL ALIVE AND THRIVING!

"We must look into this," we said. A by-road would take us to the exciting spot. It was bumpy and forlorn for a mile or more. It was as crude and narrow as we had struck in years, and at length we reached the inevitable gate where a small fee was charged to behold this marvel. Many tourists had been lured, as we had been, and we passed, with them, into desolate acres of wind-blown sand.

Many years ago, Nature had suddenly kicked up her heels, and where once green farmlands stretched away, a desert appeared. No one has been able to explain the mystery. It is a sad spectacle. Almost frightening. Rich soil, one day, and then this waste of loneliness. I thought of a phrase of Christina Rossetti's—"the featureless sands." The colors, so loudly advertised, were not visible; but the sunken apple tree was striving to wave its top branches, avid of life in all this realm of death and destruction. Pitiful. Depressing. We turned away after a little while, eager again to see the beautiful fields and meadows of Maine, which would be all the more beautiful because of this sight so terrible in its utter uselessness. There was a hermit near-by, with long hair and a bushy beard who played an organ in a tiny house, and who sold curios to the curious. But his music could not cause us to forget the wasteland beyond his door. How

A Maine hermit who lives near the Desert of Maine

did he manage to remain there so peacefully, day after day?

Freeport welcomes you, calling itself "the birthplace of Maine." A nice enough little village, evidently proud of its distinction. But we had no wish to lunch indoors after what we had seen. Better the blowing blue world and the sweeping greenness all around us. So we stopped to get some sandwiches and milk, and found an ideal place at the turn of a road, where we could partake of our simple fare beneath an apple tree that was in no immediate danger of being half-buried under a cloud of cruel sand. And how good food tastes thus eaten,

and how soon that expanse of desert was forgotten! Here, now, were loveliness and order, the freshness of a perfect September morning, the lure of green things growing, the babble of a stream, and healthy appetites to be appeased. I thought, as we sat there on the ground, of a busy broker I know who tells me he can never get away from New York, so fearful is he to leave the sound of the stock-ticker! But if he only could have heard that purling brook, and felt the breath of the breeze on his head that sunlit morning! I know that an hour or two of such loafing and leisure as we were enjoying is worth more than the gold my anxious friend desires to obtain at such a price of nervous energy; and I have pity for the likes of him. He just doesn't know how foolish is the fret and strain. We had something that day that he cannot buy, poor slave of the market that he is.

We hated to leave our little nook under the tree; but the moment always comes when one's Arab tent, as it were, has to be taken down and a new move must be made. We wanted to see Brunswick and Bowdoin College; and as we came to the town there were some fine houses along the residential streets; yet many of them were spoiled, we couldn't help thinking, by the over-ornamentation, giving them that gingerbread effect which makes

the most indulgent observer smile. They were erected during a period when architects utilized the mansard roof and those crazy crosswork iron fringes which only ruin a building. The college itself, founded in 1794, has a shadowy, dignified campus, with square brick houses and a chapel of stone. Statues here and there stand up like rugged ghosts. It is strange to pass from this civilized spot and come so swiftly to a rough, uncouth, scrubby district devoid of any beauty at all.

We found Bath, at a wide section of the Kennebeck River, a lively town, busy with its shipbuilding industry. It has crooked, picturesque streets, with no regular scheme followed, and this gives it an old-world atmosphere, a casualness that adds to its charm. Here one is welcomed, after crossing the fine Carlton toll bridge, to the coastal Maine towns and villages.

Wiscasset, beyond, is situated on a lovely and lordly hillside, with aged white brick, stone, and shingled houses. It is on the Shapscot River and was incorporated as long ago as 1760.

On almost every Maine motor plate you will observe the phrase, "Vacation Land." And so Maine is, living up every foot of the way to its well-deserved reputation as a vast playground, a grand State in which to take a holiday. There are hun-

dreds—yes, thousands—of "Information Booths" along the highways. Advice and suggestions are freely and politely given to travelers, and the motorist can only rejoice at the smoothness of the roads. "Call again, if you're ever up this way," says your filling-station attendant as he finishes his job. "We'll always be glad to see you."

As we came close to New Castle, we struck a bit of landscape that is indelibly registered on my mind. An inlet in the foreground, low hills in the background studded with trees, rolling land green and golden, bulrushes brushing the road, as entrancing a composition as the human eye could desire. We stopped a long time to drink it in just where the roadway turned. I'd like to find that spot again some day when I feel depressed and worn out. No painter could do it justice, and it loomed up so swiftly and unexpectedly that I gave a gasp of astonishment at such perfection of outline. To dwell amid such a scene—oh, fortunate natives who can gaze upon it whenever they desire. Why isn't its beauty preserved, however inadequately, on a New Castle souvenir post-card?

Damariscotta is another pretty little town; and up in this part of the country we began to see the fall vegetables laid out in front of many lawns—yellow pumpkins and squash, and huge baskets

of tender young onions, any of which you could buy for a trifling sum.

"How happy and free it all is up here," I said to Dick as we ambled along. "Wouldn't you like to live in one of these little cottages, and come to feel and know the life these people live?"

We were entering Thomaston; and just as I had mentioned freedom, a huge prison hove in sight, with its barred windows, its high stone walls, its sinister frown. Well, even here. . . . And we, who were so glad that afternoon, out in the sun and brisk weather, turned our eyes away from those enveloping walls. Sentimentalist that I happen to be, I shouldn't like to live near a prison; but the strollers along the streets of Thomaston didn't seem to mind the presence of that stern reminder of their fellows' weaknesses and shortcomings.

Rockland is a big, sprawling manufacturing town, with a concrete factory going full blast, derricks, engines and all the paraphernalia a place like this requires. But it was here that we had our first glimpse of mountains rising, of a fine stretch of water with a wide, deep inlet. Rockport, farther along, is on a high hill with a magnificent view of Penobscot Bay. Sail-boats. Again the sense of freedom.

You enter Camden through a big wooden arch;

and overlooking the bay is the most beautiful small public library, made possible by the contributions from the whole community—a mansion of an old and vanishing type. A boat race was in progress down below us, and handkerchiefs were being waved from the shore. The town was out for a holiday, and faint cheers came to us as we stood on the ridge.

These towns are so close together that one wonders why they don't amalgamate and flourish into one important community. But civic pride and prejudice may prevent such a movement. New Englanders, if you come to know them intimately, apparently dislike change of any kind. They jog along in their own particular orbit, and a "foreigner" like me would be wise to make no foolish suggestions. Therefore I instantly withdraw, on second thought, my impertinent idea.

Some one had told us to be sure not to miss Belfast—maybe it was an Irishman; I can't remember. Some one is always suggesting a certain favorite place, and I invariably look it up, hoping it will be all the kindly person said. And Belfast was.

We found a cottage on the outskirts of this fishing village, when the shadows were lengthening at the close of the afternoon. A day moon was hanging in the sky, like a silvery lantern, and there were

no clouds around it. Indeed, all afternoon the heavens had been free of clouds anywhere in that limitless expanse. We could almost see Islesboro and Dark Harbor a little farther south of us, and we began to feel the cool clear air that we had been told Bar Harbor always knew. It is the most invigorating air. It is both sweet and keen, and we longed to reach that zone which has become so popular. But to-night it was to be Belfast for us.

I walked on the wide lawn before our cottage, and the turf felt good. An elderly retired sea-captain was our host; and when I told him how pleased we were with our rooms, the only vacant ones left, he said, very modestly, that often guests came for a day—and remained a month. I didn't wonder, so cheerful were the surroundings. What he had told me I verified that night at dinner when four young ladies—sisters and cousins all the way from the far west—announced that they had spent six whole summers here, and expected to return each year. They couldn't find a better place, they were sure; they spoke up in unison—there wasn't a dissenting voice; and a fifth lady and her son immediately seconded everything they said. The excellent dinner and the well-furnished living-room bore them out.

Later, our host told me it had been a wrench for

him and his wife to turn their old home into a "tourists accommodated"; but what could they do after his savings of years had vanished when old man Depression came along? So they pocketed their pride, and now they are happy in sharing their home, as he put it, with those who seek their door time and time again. "We're like a big happy family," he said, smiling. "Glad you've joined us."

X

YOU reach Mount Desert Island by crossing a suspension bridge which is like a miniature of the George Washington Bridge in New York. Soon you come to the highest point of land in all Maine. And you come to a rugged, masculine coast, with no less than eighteen mountains rising out of the sea. Here Nature makes her grandest gesture; here granite beauty inflames your heart with its dramatic force. It is a sudden transition from the lowlands whither you have come, and is as exciting as a Wagnerian setting. You

literally expect Brünnehilde to come out of those mountain fastnesses and sing with clarion notes. How many years, how many centuries these robust rocks have lifted themselves from the unruly ocean, standing there impregnable, waiting for your presence, oblivious of Time, unmindful of man and his little ways.

The coast-line is long and majestic. Seen at first through a light mist, as it was by us on the morning we reached it, it took on a mysterious spiritual quality; yet one was conscious of the strength hidden behind the veil. A mystical giant peered down at us pigmies, a towering creature that caused us to feel even more insignificant than we were—less, indeed, than the two specks of dust crawling toward him.

What labor pains of the earth brought this mass of heavy stone to birth? What mystery surrounded its growth, what Hand guided the growing? An archæologist would tell us that this was not the original formation; that gradual changes, caused by storms and tremblings of the earth had slowly altered the first conception. The islands close by were undoubtedly part of the mainland, and had been severed by some mighty quake; and other upheavals had occurred which changed the aspect of the hills and valleys.

The fashionable residents of Bar Harbor awake each morning in this winelike air, and look out on a wild or placid scene. On some days there may be heavy fog, or the kind of thin mist we had seen. They can drive on the clear days around the island to Seal Harbor, out to East Point and view the large and small islands scattered beyond. Or they can go to Ship Harbor and South West Harbor, to Lopaus Point, and then all the way round the western shore that leads, as they fare northward, to Thomas Bay, Salsbury Cove and Hull's Cove.

But the crowning glory is, of course, Cadillac Mountain, 1528 feet in height, over the most gradual grade. And there an incomparable panorama spreads out—one that defies all feeble words of description; where one holds one's breath, and stands mute and filled with awe. We were thankful that the mist had lifted, though the sun did not fully appear. We could imagine the spectacle on a perfect day, ineffably beautiful. John D. Rockefeller, who has an estate at Seal Harbor, is responsible for the wonderful road that leads upward. It is indeed a feat of engineering; it is a fine thing to have accomplished.

One hundred square miles of this island, and every foot of it is worth seeing, with its beach cliffs,

ponds, the Arcadia National Park—the only national park on the entire length of the Atlantic Coast—the ocean drive, Sieur de Monts Spring, lighthouse, golf, foot trails, and I know not how many other interests. The Bar Harbor Airport will take you for a flying trip over this area, if you care for such an adventure.

It is no wonder that people from all over the United States flock to spend their summers in this heavenly place. Now, I had friends there, and we called up the Walter Damrosches and Mary Roberts Rinehart. Though Mrs. Damrosch was closing their house the next day, she cordially insisted that we lunch with them—you can't beat that for kindness; and we discovered Mr. Damrosch down in his formal garden, planning things for next year —borders and new designs—doing all this in those hours when he was not working on the score of a new opera. And Mrs. Rinehart, bless her, came to pick us up in the early afternoon, to show us the wonderful house she had purchased and was altering for her occupancy next season. In the meanwhile, we were to stop at her fine rented house overnight, she said, for we must surely spend more time in Bar Harbor. Her windows—and what magic casements they were!—faced the Porcupine Islands, and we saw heron again, and gulls flying

The Otter Cliffs and Ledges along the Ocean Drive in Arcadia National Park

in bright groups, and a windy sky; and we heard the surf crashing down on the rocks as the tide rushed in. A splendid setting, this, in which to write mystery stories; as segregated, if the author desired, as Mr. Marquand's island, or as busy with social life, too, when Mrs. Rinehart wanted it. That night, with the wind and the rain outside, we played bridge after a royal dinner, and blessed our stars that we were beneath such a hospitable roof, and still under the spell of the wonders we had witnessed that day, and the others that awaited us on the morrow.

The soprano cannot always sing top notes. She must come down the scale, and it is sometimes a relief to get into the middle or lower register. Though we had reveled in our high altitude, we knew we couldn't remain on that crest forever. There were other ways to follow, other trails to seek, and we pushed on, exhilarated; but it was not easy to leave the twinkling sea behind us, those mountains crouching like great mammals at the edge of it.

So fine an artist as Somerset Maugham has written: "When I considered beautiful things I found that there was nothing for me to do but to gaze and admire. The emotion they gave me was exquisite, but I could not preserve it; the most beautiful things in the world finished by boring me."

This statement astonished me; for I have never come from a beautiful scene, or a beautiful painting—from any work of art—without regret. More, I have always wanted to find it again. And I admit, at the risk of being thought untruthful, that I have never in my life been bored for more than ten minutes. Mr. Maugham, had he seen the beauty from the top of Mount Cadillac, might have been glad to follow our path into a simpler country, and never return to that dramatic spot. With me, it is

just the reverse. I wish to go back; but if I am unlucky enough never to do so, I am grateful that I have a memory that I can always keep.

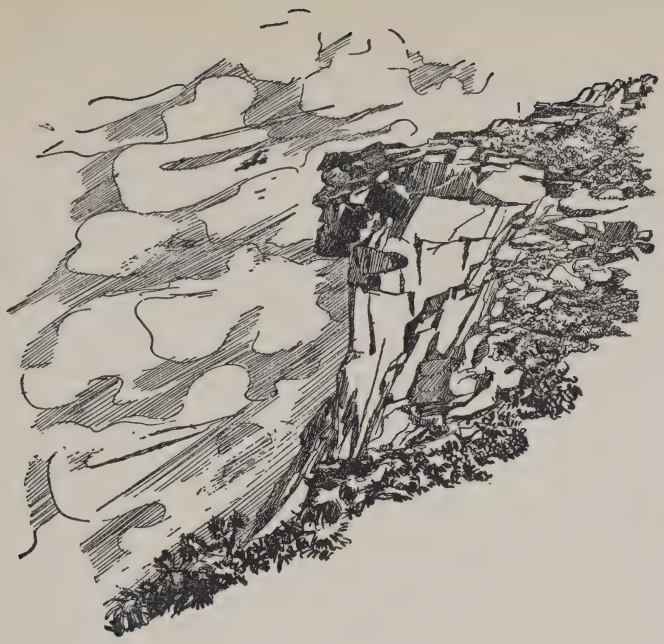
We were discovering, soon after our departure, long miles of hillside and vacant roads; and we wondered once more why men hived in crowded cities when all this green expanse awaited their coming with infinite patience. The far blue hills on the way to Skowhegan came to us through an arch of trees, and they might have been waving their hands to us. The town calls itself "The Home of New England Hospitality."

At Lakewood, near-by, on Hayden Lake, a summer theater was still in operation; but as it was about noon when we reached it, morning rehearsals were over, the actors were all away, and we could but peep into the cozy auditorium and, again in the fresh air, rejoice that the performers had such a lovely place in which to study their rôles. For the lake was a sapphire, with rowboats at the dock and a small aëroplane beside them. And there was a pavilion where an excellent lunch was served. We sat on the porch in low chairs afterwards, and finally caught glimpses of one or two studious actors committing their lines, walking up and down amid the trees, oblivious of two loafers like ourselves.

As we went on to Wilton we saw a village with a mountain forming a backdrop; but I must say that the town itself was nothing much to praise. Rumford proved to be equally lacking in charm. They manufacture paper here, and I could imagine how the employees at the plant must speed to the countryside when the day's work is over; for the landscape is consistently fine; Maine is full of lakes, ponds and lagoons, thick with glades and groves. You can drive—it would seem forever—through beautiful wildernesses. What has become of the tramps Mickey Finn used to write about with such gusto and understanding? In days not so remote they used to promenade roads like these, with pathetic bundles of food and clothing attached to a stick slung over their shoulders; they used to creep into freight-cars; they knocked on farmers' doors and left a chalk-mark for the fellows to follow them, indicating that here hospitality could be found. But they have gone. We never saw a trace of one on all our journey. Indeed, we never encountered a single "suspicious character."

Even where the country is sparsely settled one can always discover a decent place to sleep and eat. We wandered westward and northward, only now and then finding it necessary to make a detour. The tranquil golden weather had followed

us. Sometimes we were under miles of foliage, then out into the sun. We paused anywhere our fancy led us; and somehow we came into Bethel, which nestles in the heart of the famous Oxford hills, and is much sought in winter by those who love skiing. For winter sports flourish here, and Songo Lake must be a great zone of ice when the bitter season arrives. In summer, the roads through Grafton Notch are shadowy lanes of loveliness. There is plenty of good hunting and fishing, and if any one is old-fashioned enough to like walking, here is the pedestrian's paradise. We parked our car in the late afternoon and delighted in the rambles we took on foot. Only the darkness drove us indoors. We sought our rooms soon after dinner, so that we could make an early start next morning.



XI

THE trees were laced against the early morning sunlight as we passed out of Maine—reluctantly, I remember. We began to see the covered bridges which are fast disappearing—and what a pity that is. A book has been written about them, and one could sigh over their destruction. They whisper still of the dear old horse-and-buggy days,

and they must have been astonished when the first toddling motors drove more swiftly over them, and groaned a little at the heavier impress of the wheels. Seeing them is like looking at an ancient daguerreotype. They are voices out of the past, sudden reminders of times less filled with noise and confusion, relics of a day never to come again. But down they go in the throb of the present, and in their place rise short suspension bridges of iron and steel; beautiful, it is true, but with none of the picturesqueness of these memorials. When Progress calls there is no hope for quaint institutions that served their purpose well. They must crumble, like the little homes in great cities, to make way for turrets and soaring skyscrapers.

Very soon the high mountains were all around us, and Mount Washington loomed up like the giant it is. We could not help thinking how bitter the winter days and nights must be in this locality, with the snow-draped majestic king of all the hills peering down on the people in the valleys. A few houses bore signs on their doors, "Open all year." The roads are so splendid, however, that they are seldom impassable, we learned; but it must take no little courage to face the long, stern, iron wintry season that comes with icy breath.

I am almost ashamed to say that I have height

phobia, and therefore could not follow some brave tourists who sought Mount Washington's distant summit in the funicular railway that leads to it. I was content to look upon its grandeur from the deep recesses of the valley; to marvel at its glorious proportions. One feels small indeed in the shadow of that monstrous shape. But if I admired the tourists who were not afraid to reach the crest, I was doubly envious of those who stepped gaily into a plane and flew many thousands of feet higher, to view the whole surrounding country. But I am one of those chary of leaving the ground, and there's nothing to be done about my sad case. Yet in 1918 I once flew over London in a little de Haviland-4, and was not in the least frightened, though I was given the Immelmann turn by my rash and energetic young aviator, who was determined to give me a thrill. He did. Now . . . well, I can't explain the changed state of my nerves. So the reader will have to forgive me for not being able to tell of what I should have seen had I been as courageous as I know I ought to be.

One of those wonders is near-by which cannot be explained. At an altitude of 1930 feet, time and great storms have hewn the sharp profile of "The Old Man of the Mountain" out of the rock. There he is, clearly visible from a certain angle in a glen,

apparently looking out at the amazing panorama around him. People cry out when they spy him—"Look! look! Isn't he wonderful!" Others disbelieve the miracle. "A sculptor must have climbed up there," I heard one exclaim, dubiously. "Like Gutzon Borglum. You can't fool me!"

It is not so many years ago that it would have been well-nigh impossible to get into this deep green country. On foot, perhaps, with valiant effort, narrow paths might have been followed up the steep mountainside; but now the automobile can pass along broad, civilized highways, through dim, leafy tunnels that the overhanging boughs create. These cathedral aisles—how wonderful they are!

At Crawford Notch an inn of solid stone stood on a lonesome road. No other dwellings in sight. Only the sudden opening of the mountain pass, as though some celestial force had pushed the hills apart and given man a vista he could never forget. We stopped for refreshment. No other guests. A ghostly silence, and then our hostess, who proved to be a charming lady, led us into the dining-room and showed us how part of it was a tiny theater, with proper lighting effects and more scenery than you would have believed possible in such a limited space. Local talent gives plays when the season is

The Inn at Crawford Notch

at its height. New Englanders love their summer theaters. If I am not mistaken, they originated them. This one, like many another, is tucked away in an unexpected place, and I only regretted we had arrived too late to see a performance. Even in such a lonely spot the drama flourished; and in another room we found shelves laden with books, volumes that looked as if they had been read and re-read, thumbed and loved. This was much more than an average inn, you see; it had all the warm feeling and character of a cultivated lady's home. But once more we thought of the heavy winter snows, the biting winds whistling through the Notch. Well, here was another ideal spot where a

writing fellow could find the peace he might desire.

The soft, pleasant August days had long since drifted away, and in their place came a mellower month—one that I particularly love. Fleecy clouds floated in the sky, and for a long time we had no rain at all, and only a few moments of a menacing storm—which never materialized.

Naturally, it grows cooler as one fares northward; but on only one morning when we made a very early start, did I feel the need of an overcoat. By ten o'clock I had taken it off, for the sun beamed down in all his glory.

How good a place this world can be on such a day, with fields and meadows and farmlands rolling by, and hills and valleys and homesteads singing that all's well. The wonderful part of this country is that it would seem to be there just for you. These glittering roads—they were made for you, and you alone to wander over. For there are long, long miles when you encounter no other motorists, and New England people have a way of remaining out of sight. You do not see them even at their windows or on their porches. They are mysteriously hidden; and unless you pass a district school-house at the recess hour, you would believe

the little building to be uninhabited. The truth is, I believe, that thrifty housewives are busy with their indoor tasks—constantly busy. They gossip on the streets of the larger towns, when they are doing their marketing; but in the hamlets and villages they keep to themselves, strangely invisible. We saw many places that resembled Goldsmith's *Deserted Village*. The tiny soldiers' monument would look as if it craved a passer-by to read its patriotic inscription, its brief list of the community's soldier dead; but the shops were vacant as we ambled by, and so were the cottages, as far as we could see. In many an industrial town there was no sound of machinery in motion, no clouds of smoke rising from the tall chimneys. Instead, a ghostly silence.

Soon we came to Saco Lake, and here, on the edge of the bewitching Bretton Woods, an enormous hotel hove in sight, with a golf course—everything to make the visitor happy; and farther along —about ten miles, I should say—the Twin Mountain House, quite as large and commodious. Such hostelries, naturally, do a big business—magnets that draw to themselves hundreds of guests who enjoy horseback rides through the White Mountain trails, tennis and hiking. But more modest

lodgings display signs in the hope, I suppose, of capturing surplus trade. We saw one small house with this sentimental legend near its door:

SOME CALL IT DREAMLAND,
OTHERS CALL IT HOME

We could not but be amused by the variations played on the word "inn" everywhere we drove; thus: "Wel-come Inn," "Wander Inn," "Step Inn," "Always Inn"; and, for a change, "Uneeda Rest." The proprietors must sit up in the wee small hours evolving a phrase like "Hi-way o' Nite Cabins."

Little Squam Lake is merely another bright jewel dropped down from heaven, as they used to sing in all the ballads celebrating the Emerald Isle. You become used to these sudden flashes along the roadside, and by and by you begin to take them for granted, as we mortals take such gifts as our sight and hearing for granted. So, also, you become used to the dreariness of small manufacturing towns like Meredith, where they turn out linen and towels. The village designates itself by the phrase, "The Latchkey to the White Mountains."

Lake Winnipesaukee, dotted with islands; and Tilton, with its calm, shadowy streets, pleasant old residences and many monuments; Franklin,

with arching trees and vistas, near the birthplace of Daniel Webster—these are encountered, and more covered bridges delight the eye. It is only to be expected, I suppose, that a garage man in the last named locality should take advantage of the happy circumstances of his closeness to the great man's monument, and style his place of business "The Daniel Webster Filling Station."

Concord, New Hampshire, is second only to Concord, Massachusetts, in its beauty. One could envy the boys fortunate enough to be sent to St. Paul's School in this dreamy town; yet I recall that a Don at Cambridge University in England once told me that often it takes a lad two years to realize all that such a place has to give him. Then, in a flash—as one "gets religion," perhaps—the wonder of his surroundings comes to him, and he cannot drink in enough of it.

St. Paul's has an ivy-covered brick chapel which was consecrated in 1888, and the sculptured figures in the small common chapel by Daniel Chester French are well worth seeing. But the school is not the only interesting thing in Concord. The residential section is not to be missed; and there is a beautiful Home for the Aged on the outskirts. Amble about here, as we did; and then fare on to Hopkinton and Henniker, equally lovely. In

the latter village is a sign, "You are now in the only Henniker on earth." Which led Dick and me to wondering why the names of villages are so often duplicated: why there should be a Paris, Kentucky, and a Paris, Texas; a Concord here, and a Concord there; a London almost anywhere, and a Manchester, too. With a field of names as wide as the sky to select from, why cannot more originality be shown? Is it sheer laziness that causes a Town Council to designate a village as only another Louisville, say? Why not christen it Scarletina, for variety's sake? I doubt if there's a Scarletina anywhere in our land; and it's a pretty enough word, isn't it? But, of course, one knows that the earliest arrivals in New England very naturally appropriated the names they had left behind them in the Mother Country. Yet that is no reason why Westerners and Southerners, who created villages and towns much later, should cling to these same designations.

As we passed out of the one and only Henniker, on our way to Newbury, we came upon a glade where the moss and fern were like something in *A Midsummer Night's Dream.*

Would Titania and Robin Goodfellow step out and dance for us, and would a fairy lightly skip and sing.

I must go seek some dewdrops here,
And leave a pearl in every cowslip's ear.

If there were no cowslips, the plethora of moss and fern made up for the lack; and Dick, gazing at the moss, said: "How I'd like to have a smoking-jacket of exactly that tawny shade!" But what weaver could ever have matched it? Or where could one have found a strip of velvet as green-and-gold as this hidden-away material that lay in such profusion on the rocks?

Newbury is on a lake, and the foliage is so thick that the houses along the shore are scarcely to be seen. We had friends there, and were fortunate enough to find them in. Again we had a taste of New England hospitality; for we were bidden to stop for dinner; and we arrived long before dark, so we saw one of the best rock-gardens we had ever laid eyes upon; lawns almost as green as that concealed moss. We saw the sun drop like a yellow coin into the slot of the hills; and then the darkness covered the world like a cloak. Afterwards we passed on to find a cabin where for the first time heavy blankets felt good.

Next morning, bright and early, we motored by the side of the Connecticut River, with tempting glimpses of Vermont on the other side; but we were not going into that State—yet. The town of

Deerfield, in Massachusetts, seemed to be calling to us—Deerfield with its incomparable main thoroughfare on which, we knew, was old Indian House, as well as ancient doorways as picturesque as those in Salem town.

On a circular stone tablet before the famous residence, now a sort of little museum, is this inscription:

> Reproduction of the Old Indian House. Original house built by Ensign John Sheldon in 1698. It withstood attack by French and Indians on the night of February 29, 1704. Torn down in 1848.
>
> Reproduced in 1929
> by
> Wm. Gass & Sons

The tomahawk marks—grim relics of the Indian massacre—are still visible, as certain woodwork was saved when the house was demolished. The interior is as it was paneled, and one sees a sycamore-tree chair, in one solid piece, three hundred years old; an enormous fireplace; a pie closet so big that it could contain three hundred pies; and upstairs, looms and heavenly four-poster beds that must thrill a collector of antiques. When we came away after seeing the pots and pans of pewter, copper

The Indian House at night, Old Deerfield

and brass, near the door we spied an old horseshoe, "Presented by Calvin Coolidge."

I have told you that we hadn't any plans; that we wished to wander as the mood was on us, and so you must not be surprised that we left one State and crept into another where we had already been, just to see what we could see.

"Why not go to Northampton to-day?" my companion suggested. "It's not far. And then we might see a few other places before we go to Dublin, in New Hampshire, and from that pivot let's slip into Vermont."

"Done," I acquiesced. "We may move in circles, but what does it matter?"

The reader may think us quaint joggers. We were—and we admit it. But we didn't retrace our roads. We took back ones in getting once more to where we had started; and that was the only plan, if such it can be called, that we ever had. One of our favorite dissipations was to loiter in any spot that pleased us. Others may pause before the marvels recommended in the guide-books; but how many do you see stopping for some minor scenic effect that may be the best of all? They miss the byways for the highways. They go wherever any one else leads them on some canonical road, and so do not see a glen like that we had accidentally discovered, or some enchanting pink brick house worthy of the closest inspection.

Thus to Northampton we went, and found Smith College. The campus is reached through a grilled gateway, and immediately a pond is before you, surrounded by as good buildings as we found at any of the men's colleges. Supplies were being delivered at the service door, and I thought of the complicated bookkeeping, the endless detail that must be necessary in all such colleges—the higher mathematics of the culinary department, as well as that of the class-rooms; the figuring the students

know nothing of. Even the most spiritual enterprise, like a convent in a desolate hill country, must take heed of the body's requirements; must consider such important accessories as linen, laundry work, an infirmary with countless supplies. And here were groceries and fruits being laid in stock against the coming term, each item doubtless being checked and accounted for—the business being carried on with precision, like the records of incoming trains in a railroad office.

Through the kindness of a native (who turned out to be a mortician) we located the former home of Calvin Coolidge on Hampton Terrace. The present occupants were good enough to invite us in; but we had no wish to intrude, we said, as we thanked them; we simply stood near the door, and saw the sweep of the valley beneath us, and liked to think of the ex-President gazing upon it on those afternoons when he had the leisure to do so, wrapped in one of those silences for which he was famous.

An enormous tavern is in the heart of the town, filled with genuine antiques, softly lighted with candles. No raucous music to disturb you; merely the pleasant hum of voices.

Another college town was not far away—Amherst; and we pushed on to it, slowly, as usual. It

is full of the dignity we had expected—almost the most interesting campus we had yet seen, with the handsomest buildings of brick and stone, with great white pillars. And all about the most wonderful views of the open country; and such trees and shrubs! I thought, of all the college towns I saw, that this was my choice—until we got into Williamstown, with dear old Greylock Mountain, impregnable as always, looking down upon it, with its equally lovely setting crowned with thick trees, and the war memorial monument, lighted every night. The inn is gone, and in its place is a vast sports field.

Architects seem to outdo themselves when they get to a campus. If they haven't any "backs," as at Cambridge, England, with a flowing stream over which to erect a bridge—not comparable, of course, to an Inigo Jones structure—they let themselves go on façades and columns, and they achieve a beautiful symmetry. No college town in America is ugly, or even plain. A few of the monuments sculptors of dubious talent have evolved might be dispensed with; but I have never yet come across a hideous chapel or a poor arrangement of study halls. As the years go on, even these will improve. Given space, elbow room, an architect conforming to Colonial tradition, can add to the glories already

there, and cause new buildings to bloom that will do his art more than justice. Simplicity, of course, should be his watchword. A sensational note would ruin the prospect, and so it is never attempted. The colleges in bucolic surroundings, like Amherst, Smith, and Williams, are fortunately placed, in that they can expand, flow out, and not be hampered by neighboring buildings which spoil the whole plan and design.

We drove along back roads, after admiring the campus; and Dick, a Williams man, grew sentimental and wistful. I let him enjoy in silence his little interval of regret that his college days were over.

We decided to go back to New Hampshire over the much advertised Mohawk Trail, where there are more shades of green than you can possibly count—a highway that can hardly be matched for variety. North Adams, from this high summit, looks, in perspective, like a village in a fairy-tale down in the hollow. What if a closer inspection fails to keep up the illusion?

Here I must sing a pæan of praise for the public-school buildings that have sprung up all over New England. When I think of the drab structures in a city like New York, with their hard concrete yards, their ominous, frowning appearance, how

lucky are the rural pupils who attend these schools, so gay, so ample, so perfectly placed in exquisite surroundings. They are dotted over the land everywhere. Let no taxpayer complain of their lavish appointments. They are worth all the money that has been expended upon them. The little red frame school-houses, like the covered bridges, are fast disappearing, and these substantial buildings have been substituted, and speak volumes for our American enterprise. They loom up in the most sequestered districts and, of course, there is always bus service for the children in the out-lying country. Instead of resenting school-days, a child now enjoys them ten-fold, I am sure. One wishes one might have attended such a New England schoolhouse; but alas! they weren't in existence in my childhood. Besides, I am a New Yorker!

XII

A NUMBER of my friends have been wise enough to purchase old houses in various parts of New England, and I was anxious to see their places. Gertrude Shonk had chosen Dublin. She had done the sensible thing by renting a cottage for a time, "feeling out" the way of life there, not buying until she was certain she would not regret locating permanently in this locality. Amy Lowell used to spend her summers there, and

Mark Twain had become attached to it in the old days; also George de Forest Brush, the painter, and Joseph Lindon Smith. Such lovers of the countryside could not have been wrong. And when I saw the simple white cottage, with its green blinds, my friend had been able to find, I admired her selection. Monadnock Mountain is in the offing, pine trees surround her secluded home on a by-road. There isn't another dwelling in sight, yet the lake is close by, the village only a few moments' drive away. Happy selection! The joy of planning what to do with such property, how to make gradual improvements, and not get in too deep; to alter this, or change that, within one's means; to consider, with caution, a new ell, a larger kitchen, that extra bathroom one always seems to find necessary.

"Why not stay with me and the children as long as you can," suggested the gracious lady, "and go away to see other places, returning here each night?"

We were not loath, as you may imagine, to fall in with such a plan, since there was room for us, and I, at least, liked the gentle hurly-burly of the Shonk household, and looked forward to the bridge we might play in the evenings after our days of sight-seeing. It was a pleasing prospect.

We eagerly unloaded our luggage, and settled into an atmosphere of domestic comfort. Cabins were all right—but this, ah! this was a touch of paradise on earth.

The leaves were beginning to fall. We could hear the last gasp of summer on its inevitable way toward that mysterious sleep we all must take. A wistful sadness in the air. A fond farewell to the high tide of the most opulent season of the year. A tragic realization of the fact that beauty must die.

But another beauty was taking its place—a different beauty, it is true; a more golden, honeyed loveliness that would delay the winter's dream. The lush fields would soon be covered with a cloud of colored leaves. The barren trees would soon stand stark against the sky. How would these green mountains look in the robes of passionless snow? A white doom would be theirs. In another brief month, their grave-clothes would hide them, first beneath the leaves, then under the mantle of the frost and snow-flakes. They would be hushed—but only for a time. And then would come the blessed resurrection that is as awe-inspiring as death. For the buds would be renewed; the soft processes of spring would revive these mountains and valleys once more. The long anguish of winter

would depart; the sap would begin to stir. And Nature would repeat, as she has done since the beginning of the world, her high purposes. The ancient miracle would be performed again, and light and fire would take the place of darkness and death. But now—the trees were great candelabra lighting the world on its way to the grave.

These mild and mellow
  September days,
When the sun is yellow
  On bright highways,
And a bee, like a 'cello,
  Strums and plays!—

I'll keep this hour
  Forever mine,
If the world grows sour
  Like swift-brewed wine,
And there is no flower
  On any vine.

Yes! I'll remember
  On winter days,
Through bleak December,
  These leaf-fringed ways,
This gold September,
  And sing their praise.

We wanted to see the MacDowell Colony at Peterboro, and did, though no writers were there

so late in the year. But I went to its precincts, and thought of the late Edwin Arlington Robinson who loved to come here each summer, to write his poems away from the clamor of New York, and of all the others who found there the freedom to work in peace. Little individual cabins are scattered through the fields, to which a creative artist, for a small stipend, may retire. A lunch-tray is sent over at midday, and quietly placed on each doorstep. Then work may be resumed through the long slow afternoon, or rambles may be taken on hidden paths; and in the evening there is the communal dinner served in the main house, and a meeting of minds to discuss the arts and life in general. But a routine is followed seriously, and no one is disturbed at all during those hours when the artist must, perforce, be alone to meditate and dream and put words on paper.

I remembered a story of Robinson when he was there during the last summer of his life. A certain lady, distracted that her laborious composition was not bearing much fruit, approached the dean of our poets one evening after dinner, and said: "Oh, I am so discouraged, E. A.! I've been polishing and re-polishing a single sonnet over and over, and I cannot get it right! It is nerve-wracking. What am I to do, for the days are drifting by?" Robinson

looked at her, smiled sadly and said: "My dear friend, do you think a whole summer is too much to give to a sonnet if, in the end, you can make it as perfect as it should be?"

That is what the Colony gives to the writer: the large leisure so necessary; the release from all worry and fret; the complete, blessed withdrawal from the actual world. Its foundation, by the widow of that fine American composer, Edward MacDowell, was a magnificent achievement.

There were other things to look at in and near Dublin before we started off to other scenes. Situated, as I have indicated, on a lake, there are many small bodies of water where fine skating may be enjoyed in the rigorous winter weather. There is, also, we found out, a miniature open-air theater, conceived and finished by Joseph Lindon Smith; and it was he who, when I discovered him in his studio, showed it to me on his estate, and told me it was probably the first of its kind in New England. No less a personage of the theater than Ethel Barrymore once appeared on its infinitesimal stage in a masque written by Mr. Smith; and other well-known actors, as well as local talent, have trod its turf—I was about to say its boards. It is placed right in the midst of the painter's garden, with natural "wings," which are the shrubbery and

trees, and semi-circular rows of grassy seats. It can accommodate an audience of about fifty people.

At Nelson—you have to go all the way around a mountain to reach it from Dublin—they were giving a dinner-dance the first night we arrived, and we were sure it would be fun to join an old-fashioned country party like this. A book has been written by Beth Tolman and Ralph Page, who live up this way. It is *The Country Dance Book,* and the sub-title reads: "A Complete Handbook on How to Do and to Enjoy the Old Square Dances." I hadn't heard rhymes called out for many years, and it was good to listen, as the music began, to:

"Oh, I had a bonnet trimmed with blue.
Why don't you wear it? So I do.
I do wear it when I can,
And go to the ball with a handsome man!"

We were transported back to our youthful days at this gay function, and all the old figures were remembered, as I watched the young people swaying to the notes of violin and piano.

Next day we were on our way again, and when we got to Rindge, it was another of the villages that delight in telling the traveler of some outstanding feature of which they are proud. Rindge

boasted that it was "the Highest Town in New Hampshire." No need of proof of this statement; the clean, bracing air made us certain it was true —and the view for miles around.

I had noticed how seldom we had seen any policemen after our entrance into the New England States. They don't appear to be necessary in this law-abiding part of our country. They don't sneak up on you from behind a bush, on motorcycles, and snap at you like a turtle, as they have a mean way of doing around New York. Apparently, too, there are no spies in mufti. That would be unethical, I am sure, up here. It wouldn't be considered cricket. But, as we rolled jollily along toward Keene, at no more than thirty miles an hour, we did see a man in a blue uniform on the roadside. He had left his motorcycle, and was standing in the road beside a limousine, one foot on the step of it, a pencil poised above a bit of paper which might have been a summons. As we came parallel with the unfortunate tourist thus being delayed, we were signaled to stop; and of course Dick drew up on the side. It was our first encounter with the Law, and we were far from home and dreaded a forced appearance before some local Magistrate.

"Don't get angry and 'sass' him," I pleaded, in

my weak way. My friend gave me a look of disgust. I remained silent, put properly in my place. A few maddeningly slow moments passed; the limousine went on its way, and I observed the smiling faces of the occupants. They must have been let off, or they would not have worn such cherubic countenances.

It was our turn now. The officer drew up in that leisurely way of representatives of the Law. "Well," he drawled, addressing Dick. (I was only excess baggage; no need to pay any attention to me.) "I suppose you didn't see that sign a ways back, reading '25 miles an hour'?"

Dick admitted that he hadn't. "Strange," said the cop, who had a pleasant face and twinkling eyes. "Nobody ever does. But look here, and I mean this: we like to have you come up here, but there are a lot of you who go in for speeding, and we try to keep Keene and the roads around it safe. We've had only one accident in a year, and we hope to have none from now on—if you motorists will only help us. You have your problem, I know; but I have mine, too. I've got to do my duty and tell you you were in the wrong."

"I know it," said Dick.

"Promise you'll be more careful from now on?"

"You bet."

"I hoped you'd say that. Please don't forget. For as I said," looking at our license-plate again, "we really like to have you come up here; only, you should obey our signs."

Dick assured him that we would from now on. And then I couldn't help joining in our thanks to him when he told us we could continue our journey; and I ventured to add, since he was such a kindly officer, that we were touring because I was going to write something about New England. His face lighted up, at that. "Gee! Is that so? I'm glad I was polite to you. I'd like to see your book."

"You shall have one of the first copies," I promised him; "and you may find something nice in it about yourself, Mr. . . ."

"Hadley," he prompted; "William C. Hadley." And he gave me his home address. "You won't forget, now, will you?"

As we fared on, I said to Dick: "I wouldn't mind cops if they were all as courteous as Mr. Hadley, would you?"

Keene proved to be a busy small industrial city; no wild or careless driving through its streets, as Officer Hadley had said; everything shipshape, orderly.

Walpole and Charleston were snug and comfortable with their handsome dwellings. The river

is very wide here; and as we rode on, turning into Vermont at Bellows Falls, we continued our journey on the other side of the river until we saw Brattleboro ahead. A fine approach, with tangled orchards; and it was not long before little stands were to be seen everywhere, with the famous Vermont maple syrup for sale, tempting home-made fudge, incomparable jellies, and other succulent goodies. Some of these we couldn't resist purchasing for our hostess back in Dublin.

One dear old man, at such a stand before his farm-house, told us, in quavering tones, that he had known it to be fifty-three degrees below zero in this section; but he didn't mind the cold at all. Sturdy citizens here; sturdy and proud, which I knew as I recalled the floods that occurred about nine years ago. These Vermonters refused Federal aid in the crisis at that time; they were sure they could attend to their own needs, and spurned outside assistance. Green Mountain Boys still; rugged, hardy, masterful people; the stuff of their ancestors in them. You feel it, as you get deeper into the State. You know that rectitude and character and a strong ethical sense exist here, ingrained, durable, everlasting.

Vermont is the only New England State that does not touch the ocean; but in its very aloofness

from that imposing body of water, perhaps it gains something its sister states lack. Its Green Mountains are wonderful to behold; its valleys, in the sun-drenched mornings and afternoons, are vast acres of loveliness and light:

I love these peaceful valleys of the heart
  Where the soft hamlets lie;
Whose people live a gentle life apart,
  Far from the city's cry.

Protected places from the storms of life,
  The hum and throb of trade;
Ah! here there is no sense of pain and strife
  In any hidden glade.

The world well lost! The cattle, grazing, mute,
  And simple country folk content to rest;
Here is a sweetness calm and absolute,
  A land thrice loved, thrice blest.

XIII

WE had returned to Dublin, fascinated by the manner in which the days ran gladly there; and one morning early we set out for Old Bennington.

What a gorgeous town it is, with its high monument, its central green, its shining view of the valley all around it. Mount Olga may be seen in the distance, stately and serene. We wanted to lunch on the terrace of the inn that overlooked the wide expanse of country, and who should come out to greet us but my old friend, Theodore,

formerly maître d'hôtel of the Ritz in New York. He has conducted this inn for two summers now, and the cuisine is the finest roundabout. He was glad to see familiar faces from the metropolis, and generously ordered us a bottle of Rhine wine to celebrate our arrival.

We needed no stimulant, however, to appreciate the panorama spread so lavishly at our feet. I forgot such a necessary thing as food as I sat and drank in that astounding view. I even forgot to sip our wine, for I was in danger of getting drunk on beauty. A train that looked like a toy at Schwarz's crept over the rolling land, its thin puff of smoke rising like incense; and we could just make out the motors moving along the ribbons of road, like specks resembling little glittering beetles. Few scenes abroad are more beautiful than this. We felt like kings viewing a rich domain, and it was only when our solicitous waiter reminded us that our dishes were growing cold that we were brought back to the reality of the meal placed before us. I didn't believe that I could ever get enough of this scene, with its constant changes of light and shade. It was like being in the midst of a mighty bubble that I hoped would never burst.

One felt spiritually exalted here, lifted out of any dark mood. It was an anticlimax to see such

prosaic fodder as bread and butter on a table, to realize that the inner man had to be attended to. We had arrived late, with lusty appetites—which we immediately forgot when the valley spoke to us more insistently. Other people were around us, whom we had scarcely observed. They might have been ghosts, for all we knew, and it seemed a little absurd that they required the sustenance we were silently neglecting. Delicious as that luncheon surely must have been, I do not remember how much of it I tasted.

It must have been long after our coffee was served that I saw dark clouds gathering in the west, half blotting out the landscape. The sun strove valiantly to show his golden light, and finally surrendered when reinforcements of mist shot out in jubilation, and then—the rain with its slanting bayonets, and far off the cannon of thunder after a flashing gleam of lightning. The celestial hosts were bearing down upon us, and from under our protecting awning we watched brigade after brigade march across the world. It was thrilling beyond words. The tempest was an angry horde, and it rushed by in fury, striking at everything in its path.

No longer could we see the tiny train, or any of the scuttling beetles of cars. Houses were blotted

From Monument Inn, Old Bennington

from our vision, the trees swayed and tossed, about to be conquered by those rushing hosts of heaven. We could see now only terrible banners and spears of rain, gusty emblems that the blue battalions carried in their might, and then seemed to lose in

the gale. The tattered glory swept along; and then, as swiftly as it had come, it wavered and plunged, and disappeared; but it had won a victory over the quiet earth that was helpless in the attack. Yet when the sun broke through the ramparts of clouds, no dead were strewn in the valley. More green than ever were those endless miles of fertile land, more happy and peaceful and proud. The conquerors had vanished, leaving, unlike a human army, only joy instead of waste and death.

The Monument near the inn is very imposing, with a metal star at the top. It can be seen for miles around. It was erected in honor of Colonel Sethe Warner, who was born in Roxbury (then Woodbury) in 1743. The inscription upon it, in part, reads as follows:

> COLONEL WARNER WITH THE FAMOUS GREEN MOUNTAIN BOYS WON A DECISIVE VICTORY OVER THE BRITISH REINFORCEMENTS IN THE SECOND ENGAGEMENT AT BENNINGTON, AUGUST 16, 1777, THUS SAVING THE MILITARY STORES AT THAT PLACE, CRIPPLING BURGOYNE'S ARMY SO AS TO STOP HIS INVADING MARCH AND ESTABLISHING A TURNING POINT IN THE WAR OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION. AN ABLE STATESMAN AND SOLDIER, HE ASSISTED THE PEOPLE OF VERMONT TO ESTABLISH THEIR INDEPENDENCE AND TO ORGANIZE

AN INDEPENDENT STATE GOVERNMENT UNDER WHICH THEY EXISTED FOR A PERIOD OF FOURTEEN YEARS, WHEN THE STATE WAS ADMITTED TO THE FEDERAL UNION, AND DURING THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR AIDED THE THIRTEEN COLONIES IN ACQUIRING THEIR INDEPENDENCE.

So there had been bloodshed in this pensive region, freedom won in the ancient way; and I had seen only another form of battle, wherein no lives were lost. I wondered, as I stood by the grim Monument, how long it would be before men found other ways in which to settle disputes and age-old quarrels. Never, perhaps, I murmured to myself, and looked up at the triumphant sun that was now gleaming as it had been in the morning.

We were going back to Dublin for one more night, and then we should travel too far northwest from it to return again. The social interval there was appealing; but after all, we were out on the road for a purpose, and could not afford to loiter too long in any one spot, pleasant as that might be. We must, in short, jog on our way; and Vermont was an irresistible lure. So the next day found us on the path to the radiant little village of Ascutney.

We spied an inviting old white brick inn in the

valley, surrounded by a grove of trees, and we turned to it naturally. A charming elderly man was just coming out on the porch—it was close to lunch time—and I inquired if we were too early for a midday meal.

"Walk right in," he said cordially, with a roguish look in his eyes, "an' if they don't give you enough to eat, jus' holler!"

We had no need to "holler" as we sat down to a bountiful and well-served repast. The waitresses in so many of these New England inns are local girls, well born; not "servants" at all, but part of the bustling family; friendly as the gentleman who had greeted us (he turned out to be the owner of the place); and frequently such a young lady will bring your change in such large coinage that you feel it is a loud hint not to insult her with a gratuity. Vermonters are possessed of pride, and one does not wish to err by offering tips to them.

The dining-room was as neat as wax—you could have eaten off the floor, I am sure; and it accommodated no more than about sixteen guests. Such good, fresh food, too, such rich milk and homemade butter, and such pleasant words as "Won't you have another piece of chicken?" And around us the gentlest "regular" guests, people who had loitered on, doubtless, for this heavenly stretch of

weather. They were in whispered conversations—ladies and gentlemen like those we had seen way back in Old Lyme. I wanted to linger here until

Ascutney Manor

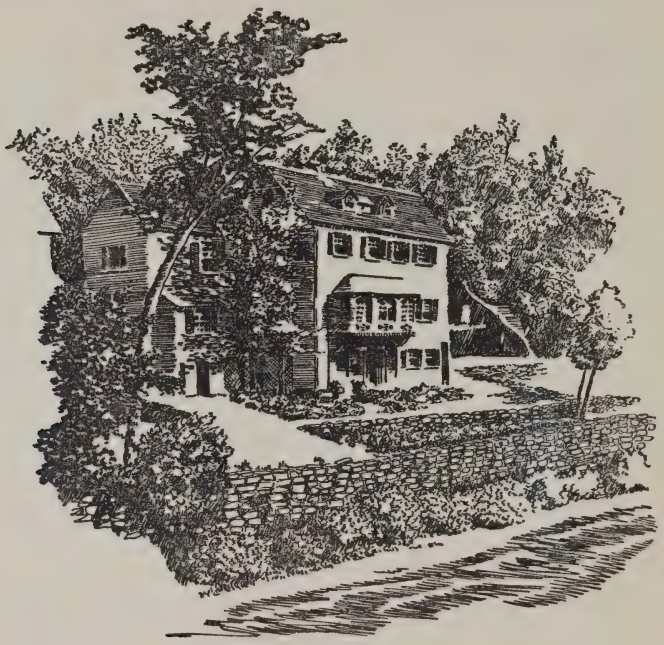
mid-afternoon, the house exuded such an atmosphere of lavender and old lace. And all around, as we saw from the windows, were the hills, touched with bronze now, and thin threads of gold. What a spot for a summer vacation, I thought. It was perfect now, though the leaves were dropping their bright largess which that miser, Autumn, sought to hold in his greedy hands. He couldn't do it forever—how many years he had

striven to keep his treasure! Those glowing bits from the mint of the hills were ready to vanish; no power could keep them overlong.

Windsor, not far beyond, is a town that gives itself the distinction of being "The Birthplace of Vermont." Cattle were grazing in the meadowlands all around it, and the country rolls and folds and opens again, so peacefully and enduringly that you think of the Twenty-third Psalm as you watch the sheep and lambs. But there is always a serpent in every Eden. Here it was a train crawling, however silently, through the valley, pushing its way along like the sly, slick thing it was. And even little Hartland, a village as pretty as one in a motion-picture, had to be disturbed by the serpent inevitably moving toward it.

Late in the afternoon we came to Woodstock, over nice clean back dirt roads, and I wanted to seek out The Green, which is the home of my friend, Otis Skinner. No trouble at all. Everybody knew exactly where the great actor lived, in an old house 140 years of age. We couldn't miss it. One pedestrian even told us he knew Mr. Skinner was at home. Village life, you see. And like a handsome country squire, in smart tweeds, the master of The Green was there, sure enough, to welcome us.

He showed us the garden that the late Mrs. Skinner had planted with such skill. It overlooks the river, which has an Indian name meaning



The summer home of Mr. Otis Skinner on the Ottauquechee River, Woodstock, Vermont

"Winding Water," and all the autumn flowers were in bloom in thrilling profusion. The house itself, a white cottage with green shutters, and a tiny gate that clicks, was full of mementoes of Mr. Skinner's distinguished stage career, and he

proudly displayed a huge silver ice-container that the officers of The Players had sent him only a short time before on his eightieth birthday. So here he spends his twilight days, in a mellow setting in this gracious town, a fitting background for a man of his fine attainments.

He told us of the outcry that had been raised in Woodstock when one of the quaintest of the old covered bridges, just up the street, had to be demolished because a new road was being built. But it had to go, like so many of the others scattered through New England. Progress rears its head, in no matter what community you visit; and later, as we turned from The Green, we saw the wreckers at their painful business, destroying another relic of the past. But the old bridge couldn't stand the strain of the traffic of 'buses and trucks. It had lived out its usefulness. Its hour had come.

There is a tender, and yet a majestic beauty in Vermont. I remember the soft silvery glint on the crest of a mountain late that same afternoon, like the shine of a steel sword; and I recall every moment of our drive through Granville Gulf, on the way to Rutland. This is a seemingly endless winding trail through deep, mysterious woods, and a trout-stream sings, as Tennyson's brook sings down the years. The light came and went, and we might

have been a thousand miles from so-called civilization.

We were to reach another trail—the famous Long Trail over the Green Mountains, on which one can go without striking a single crossroad; and like the poor cityite I am, I thought of it as a scenic railway. For up and down we went, always slowly, however, not wishing to miss the glory on every side. Farm-houses down in the valleys; smoke rising from their chimneys; hedges; gardens; the slant of the high and low hills thick with trees; an amber light here, a violet glow there; and always that basic green, falling like a Niagara, plunging downward in splendid opulence.

"Bristol is hidden behind that curve," Dick told me. "I was there two years ago, and it has a fine tavern."

We didn't have to lock the doors of our rooms, the host said; yet a New Yorker finds such a pleasant and honest state of things unbelievable. It isn't true, he says to himself. But it is. And he pinches his arm, to make sure he is not dreaming.

We had had a long day in what we called the magic mountains. I suppose it would have been wise to press the great beauty we had seen into a package in our brains, and go to sleep to see it all over again. But after our restful evening meal, a

sparkling movie sign winked at us; and that metropolitan habit of wishing to take in any "show," however inane, asserted itself. I do think both of us were trying to resist a foolish temptation. We should have known better; yet without a word of excuse we entered the gilded door and sat in the stuffy darkness while a travelogue was unfolded on the screen. It may have been a good travelogue; but all through it I kept remembering the blessed Green Mountains, the clamoring brook, the wildwood, and the honeyed light of the afternoon; and the narrator's voice, to say nothing of the far land he was describing, came in the nature of a dreadful anticlimax. This vicarious jaunt through a part of the world in which we had no interest—we couldn't enjoy it. Impossible to respond to the call of Burma, or Indo-China, or wherever we were being transported.

Finally I closed my eyes. The voice drifted away. When I looked again at the screen, an alleged comedy was being riotously performed, and actors were running about like mad phantoms, uttering raucous screams. This was more than we could bear. We hurried through the gloom, back to our inn, happy to escape. "Idiots"! we exclaimed. We meant ourselves, not the shadowy actors.

Burlington's main residential street was about

the best we had come upon in our Vermont pilgrimage. A truly American city. The country opens up here, and we knew, later, that we were approaching Canada when French signs began to appear. One read:

ENTRE NEW YORK ET MONTREAL PAR
ROOSEVELT FERRY. SERVICE CONTINUE
DE 7 HEURE DU MATIN AU SOIR.

Another:

TRAVERSEZ LE BEAU LAC CHAMPLAIN
PAR ROOSEVELT FERRY.

Still another:

SOUVENIR GRATIS SUR LE BATEAU.

Travelers are encouraged to save time and money by taking these boats. Lake Champlain is as studded with islands as a Wilde comedy is studded with epigrams. Many are so small that they cannot be inhabited; others invite human beings to seek their green shores; all are friendly as they seem to loll on the cool surface of the lake. Yeats could find another Innesfree here, if not his "bee-loud glade." And he could have built his small cabin, "of clay and wattles made." Noon has a purple glow here, too, if evening is not "full of the linnets' wings."

At Grand Isle we saw a screen of Lombardy poplars on a point of land, and beyond them we could catch the blue misty expanse of the lake. If the French-Canadian signs had not done the trick, these poplars would have caused us to believe we were in France. But soon we struck a road under construction, and we had to traverse about six bad miles, bumping, and mentally deploring the wretched way. We gave a tired workman a lift. How this stony stretch made us remember all the polished roads we had left behind us! Yet there were compensations for our rough going. Reflections in the water—like the Loire in France, Dick said. A sparsely settled section. Swanston with its completely foreign atmosphere. Those red-brick residences in St. Albans—a deeper, richer red than we had observed elsewhere. A sign that made us smile—"Far-e-nuff" cabins.

It was good to know that we could have gone straight into Canada without showing any passports; without changing our money for the coin of the realm there. There would have been no trouble about it at all. Indeed, Americans are welcomed—so long as they are not criminals seeking escape! And we thought of the difficulties nowadays when reaching borders in Europe; of all the delays; the sudden changes of language; the visas

and the complicated explanations; the unpleasant questionings. And we thanked whatever gods there be that we need not be entangled here if we decided to slip into this neighboring territory. But we did not wish to do so. We only wanted to drive along the edge of the Lake in our own land, and, when we had let its spell sink into our consciousness, drift southeast again.

We got down to Middlebury—a small college town with a good campus, rough stone buildings, and a magnificent view of the Green Mountains. Space all around us. Flowing fields. Rust on the leaves now. A tang in the air. The sun going down in splendor. Goldenrod about to fade, too. Some black clouds appeared immediately after daylight dwindled. We must reach Sudbury, where some one had told me I should find a quiet old hotel on a hillside, and country that resembled that in Surrey or Suffolk.

A pelting rain began to fall, and the darkness descended fast. But even in the storm we could see how this valley spread out like a colossal dark mantle, with heavy fringe on its edges. Lights sparkled here and there, soon lost in the blackness. The sides of the road were gutters through which the rain flowed in torrents. A wind was blowing the leaves into them, and how good the windows

of Hyde Manor looked when we saw their yellow panes! We had raced with the rain, but it had beaten us to our door.

We learned that Hyde Manor had been in existence since 1801. Five generations of the Hyde family had kept it open. It was a Post House years ago; the very first New England boarding-house. Its warm interior felt doubly appealing after our tempestuous drive. Nice people again. Although a big inn, no distracting music, no blatant radio going at full tilt. Soothing surroundings. The army of the rain moving on down the valley to find another camp.

Next day, the sun out once more, a shining disc. The earth had been wonderfully washed and scrubbed. The tarnish of the leaves all the brighter now. A clean, glittering, mellow morning, with the golf-links opposite our porch a brilliant green carpet, and the lake down the road an iridescent gem reflecting the airy clouds above it.

On to Manchester by back roads as still as a cathedral. Leaf-canopied lanes. Bubbling miniature cataracts and fern-fringed streams. The sun invading the privacy of sequestered ways. A delightful drive all morning to a town that lies on the Ethan Allen Highway, as highly polished a place as we had yet visited, reminding one, some-

what, with its thick trees and aristocratic aspect, of Saratoga. Big, rambling hotels with brightly uniformed bell-hops. Equinox Mountain not far away, Mother Myrick Mountain near it, ponds and a splendid golf-course; fancy shops; a civilized resort, clean and full of life, yet strangely hushed for all that.

If there are any number of activities in and around Manchester in summer, there are just as many in winter, we learned. Ski trails on Equinox Mountain, with innumerable practice slopes; bobsled runs, and a convenient skating rink; amateur championship sled dog races; and so on. It is a hive of sporting energy all the year round, and people come from everywhere, from Thanksgiving far into March to enjoy the keen, crystal air as they ski down those formidable mountainsides.

Lingering around Manchester, we became fascinated with old and new doorways. One I recall —what you might think of as a Chinese Chippendale white grill, with flower-boxes above it which dripped the blossoms downward in a riotous cascade. And we spotted an ancient yellow wooden mansion, dated 1767, weather-stained but otherwise in excellent condition. It may have been a half-way house in departed times, where coaches

drew up with travelers, close to the road as New England taverns always were, so that drivers did not have to fight their way through drifts of snow.

On to Dorset. Tranquillity in this village with its English name. How contented the few strollers in its streets looked, and no wonder; for there was no noise, only an immense stillness, a passionless repose. There are other hamlets up this way, with no factories and only a few shops, that appear almost like those deserted villages I have spoken of, so lacking in life they are.

But Arlington, fair Arlington, is not one of them. Yet do not misunderstand me, for it is in no sense a place of excitement. It nestles down cozily, and I was perhaps the most active person there when we reached it and I spied the drowsy cemetery on the main street. I had to get out of the car and wander about this serene city of the dead; for inscriptions on gravestones have always interested and fascinated me. "Where are all the bad folk buried?" as a wag once said; for it is solemnly true that when we are laid away for our last sleep, we take on a virtue and an excellence of character that we may never, alas! have possessed. I copied down some of the fond expressions on a few of the tombs. The dates, you will see, are very old. The

flowery rhymes speak of a period when men were more deeply concerned with religion and the mysterious hereafter than they are in this hurrying age:

In memory of Capt. Elijah Galusha,
who died May the 26th, 1783, aged
25 years, 6 mos. and 27 days.

"You Travellers now stop and spy,
As you are now, so once was I:
As I am now, so you must be,
Prepare yourselves to follow me."

This grim rhyme was evidently a great favorite, for it is repeated on many of the graves:

In memory of
Mrs. Mary Lyon,
the amiable Consort of Colonel
Matthew Lyon who died in Arlington
April the 29th a.d. 1784, aged
39 years & six months.

"Ah she's gone She's took her flight
Beyond this Hemisphere of night.
Gone to enjoy her christ above
In the eternal world of love."

It is odd that a careless engraver should have seen fit to capitalize words like "consort" and "hemisphere," and give us "christ" in lower case. And here is another with its curious spelling:

In memory of
Mariam, Consort of Ebenezer Leonard, who
died June 7th 1800,
aged 63 years
and 9 months.

"The corps that's laid & buri'd here
Was once among the liveing
Her contact known her virtue shone
Equal to any womon
She in her last and dieing hour
Maintained a strong belief
In Jesus Christ her only power
To grant her sweet relief."

On another slab, of an old man who died at the ripe age of ninety, I read:

"Hark! from the tomb a doleful sound;
My ears, attend the cry:
'Ye living men, come view the ground
Where you must shortly lie.' "

On another stone, this:

"Vain world farewell to you,
Heaven is my native air;
I bid my friends a short adieu,
Impatient to be there."

The local poet who penned the following epitaph for a lad taken from this troubled world in 1793, aged only sixteen, had, unfortunately, little

knowledge of scansion. I regret that two lines at the end of his stanza could not be deciphered:

"This youth tho Young was lov'd by all,
By old & young, by great and small.
His generous soul his obliging way
Among his acquaintance bore their sway . . ."

On another was this couplet:

"Farewell the world with all its glittering toys:
Saviour come waft me to eternal joys."

And still another proclaimed:

"My flesh shall slumber in the ground
Till the last trumpet's joyful sound;
Then burst the chains with sweet surprise
And in my Saviour's image rise."

For some one who passed on in 1808:

"Behold my friends and turn your eyes,
To view your fate without disguise,
This hour my fate your own may be,
Embrace a Christ and follow me."

I was full of thoughts, naturally enough, of Gray and his Elegy: of ambition, the boast of heraldry, the pomp of power, and "the paths of glory that lead but to the grave"; and I went away, leaving those long-dead mortals to their quiet sleep. New England is full of such cemeteries. What good earth it must be in which to rest!

XIV

NOW we went down to South Shaftsbury—a little village, on the outskirts of which lives a great poet. But the old saying about a prophet being without honor in his own country was not justified in this case. Robert Frost, when we asked where his farm was situated, was well known in this bucolic community. A nice old gentleman, after directing us, said: "Jes' been cuttin' corn fer him. He's a fine man, Mr. Frost."

We might easily have missed the turn up the hill

that led to the poet's house; for it is a narrow path the average wayfarer would scarcely notice. But there were two R. F. D. mailboxes in juxaposition, and on one I made out the name of America's famous nature poet. It was a box no larger than the one so close to it, but it took on added importance when I glanced at it. For it pointed the way to the home of the author of "The Death of the Hired Man," "A Patch of Snow," "Home Burial," "The Wood Pile," "House Fear"—all those homely and beautiful songs of New England soil I have come to love so deeply.

The house was not to be seen from the lower back road, which is rocky and difficult. As we swung up the path, and at last found the simple frame farm-house, with its tiny porch and a garden in which zinnias of all colors were flourishing, I thought what a fine situation this was for the man whose nature poems have thrilled the world as much as Wordsworth's. For from his windows he could look out and see Arlington not many miles away, with mountains in the distance, and a glossy meadow directly beneath him. Gnarled trees and pine shrubs were all about. I looked eagerly to see if there were any signs of human life, and knew at once that no one was at home. Too true. The doors and windows were locked. So we sat on

the porch, taking in the picture before us, watching the delicate shades mingle and separate, and then mingle again.

How Robert Frost loves this part of the world! Some lines of his came to me as I sat there, from his "New Hampshire": *

> She's one of the two best states in the Union.
> Vermont's the other. And the two have been
> Yoke-fellows in the sap-yoke from of old,
> In many Marches. And they lie like wedges,
> Thick end to thin end and thin end to thick end.

How I wished the poet had been there with us that afternoon! But one can't expect to have the good fortune of finding every one at home when one unexpectedly calls. I was grateful for this hour in the solitude of the mountains. And Frost, as I thought of his poetry, was somehow with me.

There is an old Spanish proverb that I have liked for a long time: "Mountains and mountains never meet—but the sons of mothers do." Those green tree-crowned turrets cannot come any closer than they do; but we mortals can move toward one another, and sometime Robert Frost and I may meet again.

* From *New Hampshire* by Robert Frost. Reprinted by permission of Henry Holt and Company, Inc.

I left a note for him, telling him how sorry we were to miss him, slipped it under the door, and went away.

It was down to Connecticut again for us. We had started on our pilgrimage, as you know (if you have read this far) by skirting the south-easterly part, along the Sound, and we wished to return to see some of the loveliest villages in all New England, if not in the United States. Ridgefield was one of them, where Geraldine Farrar has made her home ever since she retired from grand opera and the concert stage. And Litchfield, with its wide main thoroughfare, was another. Grand old towns. A flowery, shining region, in no way sad under the first touch of Autumn's hand; rather, two joyous elderly ladies decked out in sparkling jewels, almost appearing to skip along the road. They had a gentle elegance in their bright brocades, and if the aging year was soon to filch their gems, they never gave the plundering a second thought. New diadems would be theirs—brilliant necklaces in winter, and then the crocus, and hyacinthine adornments which the unfailing spring would be sure to lavish on them, as in the past. Meanwhile, they were enjoying this season of delicate hues, and we felt like blowing each of them a kiss of admiration.

The country around Redding was likewise tripping gaily; but when we came to Danbury, like a rough and uncouth relation of the villages which do not burden themselves with manufacturing plants, we were amazed to see a tree that had fallen through a porch. No storm had troubled us; but there must have been a heavy one in Danbury; for soon other torn-up roots and wreckage were strewn in our path. "Hurricane," a man told us as we slowed up to view the side of a house that had caved in. "Pretty bad," he added, shaking his head. We didn't need to be told this. "Worse farther south and north of here. They say Long Island got hit the worst of all—way down toward Westhampton."

We bought papers at a newsstand. The havoc wrought by the hurricane was unbelievable. We, who had traveled so many miles through brightness and beauty, were brought back in a twinkling to devastating floods and the fury of the elements—to this long winding trail with death in its wake. It was a hideous awakening. We had no wish to avoid the wretched scene, but how helpless one feels in the presence of so overwhelming a catastrophe. What we were now seeing was in no wise so terrible, however, as the sights we were to come upon later.

We went slowly and sadly to Bethel, and mercifully that town had not been despoiled. Yet all the way rumors came to us of the terror that had been spread through the countryside. There was something near Bethel we wished to see. It was the music colony conducted by the famous singer, Madame Queena Mario, late of the Metropolitan Opera Company; and all the way toward it I prayed that no harm had come to it. No traces of the storm were visible; for a hurricane is like a nervous—yes, an insane creature that runs amok, and there is no telling which way it will rush. And Bethel, high on a sunny hill, had been spared. It looked to us like the Promised Land after the sorrowful sights we had witnessed so briefly.

Every one knew where Queena Mario lived. The traffic policeman knew even more; he had seen the soprano doing some shopping (village life again!) and if he spied her, he would tell her, he said, of our impending visit. Her school was only a mile or so out of town. And please remember the Chief to Madame Mario, were his parting words.

After the "rain of terror," as we thought of it, the peaceful farm we sought and found was doubly delightful. There was not only the main house, but two or three smaller ones, charmingly furnished—gay chintz curtains, hook rugs, and of course a

piano—where the twelve students live. Madame Mario came back soon, having heard we were on her trail, to show the whole place to us, with its theater equipped with scenery and lights—an old barn transformed into a playhouse that must delight the youthful singers.

We might have been five hundred miles from anywhere. What luck to have found so secluded a spot, where the singing of the pupils would disturb no one. The birds in the trees might be jealous, but there were certainly no neighbors to complain in case scales were ascended and descended too loudly and too often.

"We gave an opera here a few weeks ago," Madame Mario told us. "The tenors and bassos were imported from New York. The performance was a great success. Next year we may go on a little tour around Connecticut, taking our equipment in a gipsy-cart."

That sounded like something out of a medieval tale. How wonderful it must be for these girls to be under the direction of such an up-and-doing manager—to go wandering with her, singing all the way; and then coming back to the farm, with the simple food served at one big communal table; to study not only music but French and German and Italian; to take regular exercise, and then fall

asleep in this quiet spot after a hard day's work. There must be a lot of fun mixed with the difficult tasks. "Yes," said Queena Mario, looking as young as any of her students. "But the work comes first. No nonsense around here. They all understand that. If they don't—out they go! But not one has gone yet."

We wanted to linger on when the sun was starting on his downward course, but we got into our runabout to fare along to Washington, where we planned to spend the night, possibly with my friends, Paul and Ruth Cornell.

After the radiance around Bethel, we came, near New Milford, to further scenes of destruction—roads flooded deeply, stricken trees, blasted barns. One meadow was now a vast lake, and two farmers in a rowboat were struggling to rescue some animal that had sunk beneath the rushing water. We paused, and saw them bring to the surface a tiny new-born calf. They got the helpless little animal safely into a barn, and we could hear the mother cow whimpering for her offspring. That barn—it looked like a miniature Noah's Ark rocking on the tide; but we knew that the cattle within it were secure. That was something to be grateful for.

Now, truly, Nature had gone on a rampage.

But had not man, with war in China and Spain, and what we had read of Central Europe, been equally guilty of insane behavior? The elements were furiously following his stupid ways, shaking the earth with tempestuous blows, fiercely frowning over the peace of valleys and streams. I had never before seen a flood—water churning in violent circles, twisting, hissing, pouring menacingly out over wide roads; reaching up to second and even third stories of houses; almost covering stone structures. It was like a live thing, spreading terror and doom. It was something angry beyond all naming, discolored and cruel. What it had taken years to build was now destroyed in one blinding instant. Gardens gone. Chimneys crumbled. Walls parted. Paths inundated. Stone bridges torn like paper. Century-old trees twisted into horrible shapes.

We were glad when, with effort, we moved on the upward slope that led to Washington. Here it would be safer; but we encountered a slashing rain there after the disappearance of the sun. It was as if the elements said, "We can demolish even more! We have not finished yet!" And through those pelting drops we went, our windshield an opaque square. "The wind was a torrent of darkness," as Noyes's highwayman knew. We drove

against it at desperate odds. Should we never be able to reach a telephone? I did not know the way either to my friends' house or to the inn; but just as I was in despair, the lights of the latter became dimly visible. The Cornells were away, a voice informed us; so there was nothing to do but unpack and tarry where we were.

The next morning, which miraculously burst like a fair flower after the storm, Ruth got me on the wire. "How dared you stop at an inn when there were empty rooms in our house?" she scolded. "Don't you know us well enough to have stayed here, even though we were absent? Silly fellow!" (But I don't think I know any one well enough to walk into a house at an unseemly hour and take possession, as it were.) "Come right over! The very idea of your being where you are, and we right here!"

Thus did we have another taste of New England cordiality. We were being spoiled; and yet—how could we object? Pleasant as the inn had proved, that friendly open door was far more to our liking.

Romford School, not far off, which is owned and run by the Cornells, was not hurt in the hurricane's wild, shattering progress. It is one of the finest preparatory schools for boys in all our country, and it has the advantage of being away from

main-traveled roads. Glens and hills surround it. The athletic field is sumptuous; and some of the pupils who have a love of the drama have built a cozy theater near-by—not as large as Queena Mario's opera-house—but ample for the performances they arrange from time to time.

We were in the Berkshires next morning—those delicate, friendly hills that make you think of English counties. We had passed through pretty Lakeville, where the Hotchkiss School is situated, and shadowy Great Barrington where there is a school for girls, and the foliage that had not been swept from the boughs was shining in all its golden-purple-crimson glory. Ridgely Torrence's lovely line, "Soon will the autumn coax the rose away," came into my mind; but sadder than autumn was the sight of the Housatonic River, usually so placid a stream, surging and heaving at Stockbridge, rolling out over the highways. The golf-links were not to be seen at all, and the concrete paths were cracking like thin ice. At Owen Johnson's Ingleside we heard all the sorrowful tales of people driven from their homes down Holyoke way, and beyond, their household goods scattered and lost, and some lives, too. Trains had ceased to run. Bus service was perforce discontinued; but Ingleside, except for one great fallen tree, was safe, though down the road a

few rods the Housatonic continued to spread with torrential force.

To reach Lenox we had to go by back roads. No signs of destruction on this higher plane. The great estates had been passed by; the enormous auditorium, seating at least seven thousand, where music festivals have been held these last few years, was intact. A movement is now on foot to make this colony another Salzburg. The finest concerts have been given here, and it is an ideal spot for such an enterprise, and the acoustics leave nothing to be desired. The auditorium is covered, against possible rain. Subscriptions have been received from innumerable sources, and now that Salzburg is no more what it happily used to be, why cannot its spirit seek this loveliest spot, its traditions be carried on? It is the perfect setting for similar festivals, for it lies in the very heart of the beautiful Berkshires, and is accessible to the music lover.

Most of the mansions in fashionable Lenox are hidden in acres of trees, and so the tourist, passing through this colony, may miss a sight of them. But we learned that Edith Wharton's old home, which she had not occupied for many years, because of her exile in France, was soon to be sold at auction. I wanted very much to see where the dis-

tinguished author had lived and written some of her early books; where she had entertained friends like Henry James, and of which she told with such nostalgic grace in her unforgettable memoirs.

The estate consists of no less than one hundred and fifty-five acres, overlooking Laurel Lake. Mrs. Wharton had disposed of it years ago to Mr. Shattuck, now dead; but it has been beautifully kept up since its last occupancy, not for an instant allowed to lose its clipped and sparkling aspect.

The entrance is through a long *allée* of maples over a pebble roadway. The old brick carriage-houses are still there; so are the gardens, all in rich bloom, with abundant white phlox, Michaelmas daisies and petunias of every conceivable shade. The fountains were gushing, with goldfish in their basins, the lawns were skilfully barbered, and a tiny brook rippled by, filled with watercress such as Peg Woffington would have liked. The mansion itself, French in feeling and tone, is in perfect condition, with high ceilings; but we were amused by the old-fashioned electric-light brackets, some still containing gas-jets. Fireplaces in most of the huge bedrooms. Hardwood floors. Empty bookshelves in the big library. But no evidences of decay. The rare tapestries were, of course, gone; but outside

lay the Italian garden with glimpses of statues, seen from the wide terrace, and the linden *allée* below it.

Such estates are becoming rare here, as elsewhere. The house and gardens were haunted by Mrs. Wharton's gracious presence. I liked to think of her sitting by the window of her workroom, looking out on the landscape that must have been dear to her, and I knew that she had given up this house with regret. I am glad that the beauty of this spot has not perished. It has increased as Time has softened and mellowed the stucco walls.

It was two days before we felt it safe to start back to New York. Echoes of the devastation of the hurricane came continually to us. There had been severe wreckage along many of the roads and in the villages we had seen in their splendid peace. Even Dublin had suffered, with Peterboro overwhelmed. The great trees we had loved in Amherst were blown down. The Long Trail over the Green Mountains was woefully wounded. Little Wood's Hole had been violently shaken; but oddly enough, Nantucket Island, so far out at sea, had scarcely known of the strange and temperamental actions of the storm.

Later, while I was busy with these pages, I read of a poet's feelings about the whole ghastly havoc.

These are the lines of David Morton, on the damage wrought in quiet Amherst. They say, better than any prose could have said, what I too felt: *

It is not only that the trees are gone,
Whose roots were in our breasts, as now we know,
When the earth yielded and the breast held on,
Not knowing any way to let them go . . .
Not merely that the lost and wandering eye,
Ranging horizons to the east . . . to west . . .
Finds unfamiliar angles of the sky,
And wanders on and finds no certain rest.

Not this alone . . . Our minds had somehow been
(For very long and happily in this place)
Another sky that elms were branching in
With such cool benisons of special grace,
That we shall know, I think, a nameless lack
Of something gone, of something wanted back.

Yes! how we want back those broken branches, those overarching leaves! And how long it will take for them to return to this beautiful earth!

We had traveled almost three thousand miles. We were returning on roads that had been untroubled by the elements, and what a morning broke for us on this last lap of our journey! No

* Reprinted by permission of David Morton and the *Amherst Record*.

clouds in all that tent of blue above. No trace, where we were faring, of the agony so lately in the world. Only broad, bright highways like those you see in children's picture-books, with a king and his train moving toward a distant castle.

Our distant castle was New York. Each mile brought us into heavier traffic. At first, we had met only an occasional car, as in the States farther north; now the roads began to teem with other vehicles—lumbering trucks and awkward 'buses rolling like Hannibal's elephants through the hill country. More numerous hot-dog stands. "Chicken dinner" signs. Gas-stations in rapid succession. Towns that jostled one another, with no elbow room. Trolleys swerving. Constant traffic signals, and long waits in line. Drivers calling out insults to others. Ah! we knew how close we were coming to our castle—to that city of fame and shame, of tumult and laughter, of tears and joy, of kindness and cruelty, of confusion and peace—which is called New York. Soon we should be part of it again—little threads in the vast pattern, twisting in and out, weaving our way through the maze, hating it and loving it almost in the same instant. Now that our holiday was over, we were ready for the busy days before us in the most amazing and electrical city in the world.

It's not a bad place to return to. It's anything you wish it to be. It hurts and it heals.

New York! There it was ahead of us, with its Babylonian turrets and towers, its granite coldness, its strange warmth; with its mysterious tug, its indescribable fascination; its iron energy. We rushed into its great outstretched arms.

For after all, it was Home.

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